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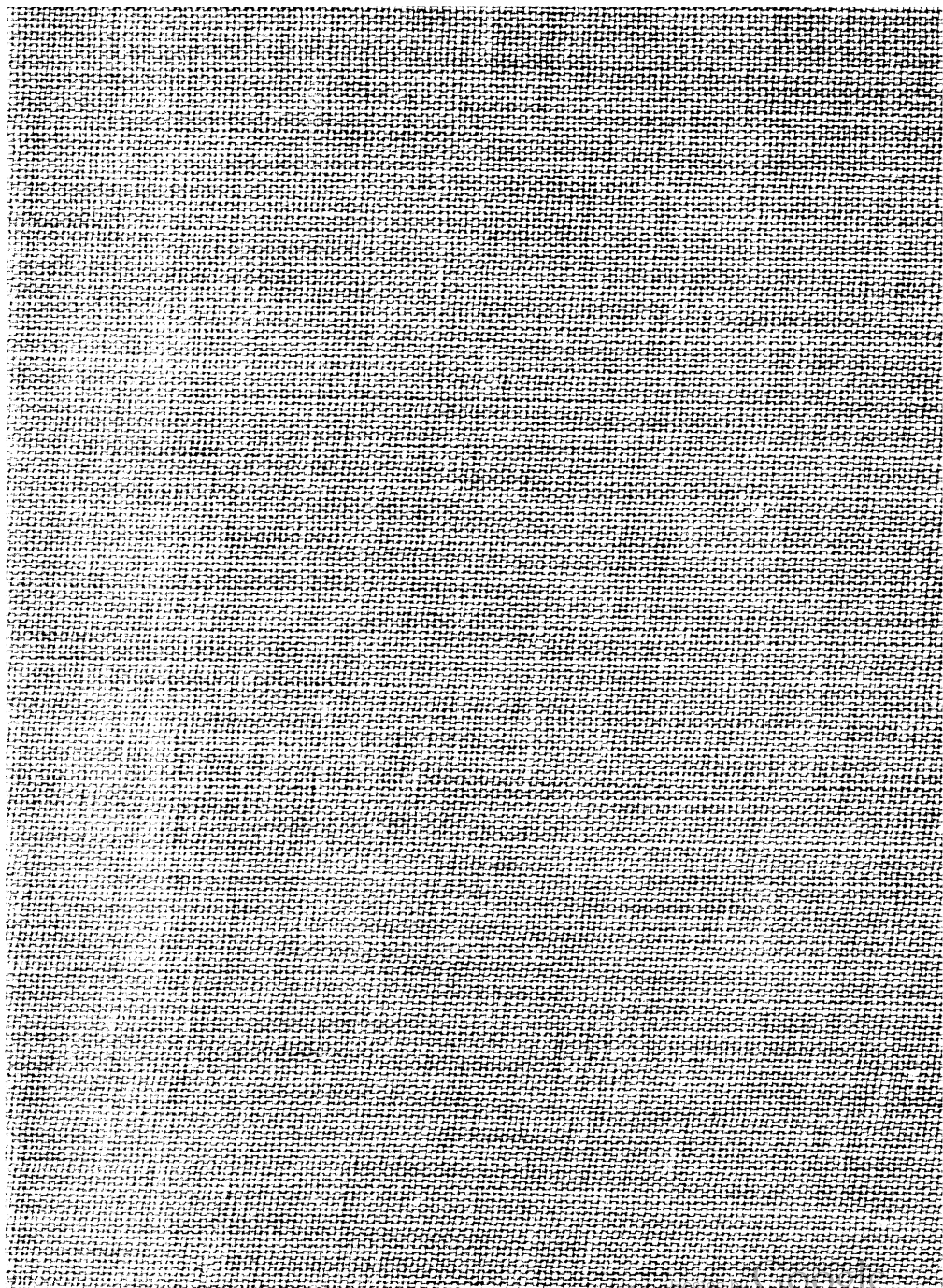
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MEDIÆVAL SCOTTISH POETRY

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of the

Scottish Poets

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MEDIÆVAL SCOTTISH POETRY

KING JAMES THE FIRST

ROBERT HENRYSON

WILLIAM DUNBAR

GAVIN DOUGLAS



GLASGOW: WILLIAM HODGE & CO

1892



NOTE.

THE mediæval poetry of Scotland, equally with the earliest Scottish poetry, has hitherto been all but inaccessible to the general reader. The difficulties in the way of anything like a popular study of poets such as James I., Henryson, Dunbar, and Douglas may be gathered from the fact that the works of these four, when found, are scarcely to be had together for a smaller sum than five guineas. The present volume is an attempt to overcome these difficulties, and to render available the flower of mediæval Scottish poetry. In all cases, excepting the more voluminous works of Gavin Douglas, the poems included are printed complete.

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MEDIÆVAL SCOTTISH POETRY.

THE history of Scottish poetry divides itself naturally into certain strongly marked periods corresponding to periods in the political history of the country. The most interesting of these poetic periods in many respects is that in which the mediæval spirit reached its highest expression. Almost the sole subject of the country's early muse had been the deeds of arms and heroes. After the great struggle with England there had ensued the century of the chronicler-poets, and in their hands Scottish verse had drawn its inspiration entirely from the national patriotism. James I., however, among other advantages, brought home with him from his captivity a new poetic influence—the influence of Petrarch and Chaucer. From that time, beginning with James' own kingly composition, a fresh life seemed to be abroad in Scottish poetry. It was as if a soft summer wind had come blowing out of the south. In the heart of the north there began to throb new

pulses of thought and desire. Imagination stirred again and woke. Beside the old stem of heroic narrative sprang new poetic forms—pastoral, allegory, satire, ballad. And presently, passionate, rich, and exuberant, this later poesy of the Middle Ages burst into prodigal flower.

In the fifteenth century there was passing over Europe one of those great waves of vitality which from time to time have made and marked the eras of history. A later wave of the same sort, yet unnamed, made its political mark in the French Revolution, and finding early expression in Scotland in the poetry of Burns, gave birth to the romantic genius of Byron, Scott, Balzac, and Goethe, and the world of modern thought. The moving event in the fifteenth century, perhaps, was the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. For hundreds of years the ancient capital of the Eastern Empire had been the chief repository of the traditions of Greek literature and civilization; and the scattering of Byzantine scholarship over Europe upon the fall of the city largely helped to bring about that revival of thought and art which in the south took the form of the Renaissance and in the north of the Reformation.

The Scottish poets of the last decades of the fifteenth and the first of the sixteenth century cannot, it is true, be reckoned singers of the new

era. There is about the work of Henryson, Dunbar, and Douglas a mournful note that betokens it of an age about to pass away. They are not the prophets of a morning-time, and the soul that shines in their verse has the splendid weariness of full experience, not the hot enthusiasm of an epoch's youth. It would seem, however, as if a breath of the coming life had touched the air, and to the ripeness of the older time had added a flush of colour and strength. There is reason to believe that all the great Scottish poets of the period had visited the Continent, and there, it is probable, they had felt something of the quickening of the new era that was about to dawn. At any rate it is certain that the poetry of mediæval Scotland found its fullest and richest expression at the last, when feudalism in church and state had reached its climax, and when, before the kindling of the Reformation, the old order was about to disappear.

The political circumstances of the period in Scotland throw their own light upon the subject.

In the history of every nation which has perfected a national life there can be distinguished a golden era. Athens had her time of Pericles, Rome her Augustan age, Later Italy her Renaissance, England her reign of Elizabeth. A regular likeness may be noticed

in the circumstances of all these periods. When a Philosophy of History, Aristotle's ambitious dream, at last is written, the phenomena of national growth and decay may be discovered to be as regular, even to minute details, as the growth, flourish, and decay of the forest oaks. It is enough here to remark that, after an infancy of obscure development and a youth of storm and struggle, there appears always to come a national manhood of exuberant spirit and strength. A new sense of power seems to awaken. While conquest flushes the country's arms, and wealth floats in upon a flowing tide, the national genius of poetry and art breaks into splendid fire.

Scotland reached this era of her history towards the end of the fifteenth century. Out of its Celtic, Saxon, Cymric, and Norman elements the nation had been born into a new existence amid the early Wars of Independence. Afterwards, for one hundred and fifty years, the Stewarts had been making their way from the position of little more than party leaders among a turbulent nobility to the actual sovereignty of the state. But towards the close of the fifteenth century the royal house had at last secured for itself unquestioned power. A firm, strong government was established under the sceptre of James IV. To its more ancient

acquisitions of the Western Isles and the Isle of Man the crown had lately added the isles Orkney and Shetland. By the rapid increase of the country's maritime enterprise possibilities of wealth had recently developed to an extent before unknown. And in the eyes of Europe just then, chiefly because of the foothold she afforded for checkmating the movements of Henry VII., Scotland had assumed a position of large consideration.

These were the greater political influences at work to bring about the ripeness of the time. Some minor circumstances were perhaps not less important.

James IV. had inherited the hoarded wealth of his unfortunate father, as Augustus Cæsar inherited the wealth of the dead Julius; and, like Augustus, the Scottish king sought by all available means to encourage the arts of civilization in his realm. James himself was no mean scholar, speaking Latin, French, German, Flemish, Italian, Spanish, and Gaelic, besides his native Scottish, and his tastes and his policy alike were towards refinement.* Never before

* These and other particulars of James and of Scotland at that time are to be found in a letter dated London, 25th July, 1498, from Don Pedro de Ayala, Spanish ambassador to Scotland, to his master, Ferdinand, contained in the *Calendar of Spanish State Papers*, edited by Mr. Bergenroth (1862-8). See also for a view of the reign an interesting little volume, *The Days of James IV.*, arranged in extracts from contemporary writers by G. Gregory Smith, M.A., 1890.

had there been so brilliant a court in Scotland, and never was there to be so brilliant a court again. For the fourth time a Scottish king had married an English princess, and for the fourth time a consequent wave of civilization seemed to pass across the country.* Gay tournaments, huntings, feastings, were the pursuits of the nobility; and amid the quickening of social life the arts that elevate and the arts that charm rose into high esteem. At the same time—as great an influence, perhaps, of another sort—the discovery of printing was introduced into Scotland during the reign of James IV.

It was in circumstances like these—the national pulse beating with its fullest life, and the fortunes of the country a rising flood—that the national poetry might be expected to put forth its brightest blossoms. This in fact was what came to pass. Fifty years earlier than the great revival of letters in the southern half of the island the golden age of her poetry arrived in Scotland.

* Malcolm Canmore had married the sister of Edgar Atheling, Alexander III. the daughter of Henry III., James I. the niece of Henry IV., and the reign of each of these kings had marked a distinct advance in the cultivation of the arts of peace in Scotland.

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

KING JAMES THE FIRST.

WITH James I. there appeared in Scottish history at once the genius which inspired and the tragedy which haunted the ill-starred Stewart race. His grandfather, Robert II., had not lacked energy in his youth. It was in great part owing to him that the tide of English conquest had been rolled back in the minority of David II. But he was fifty-five years of age when he ascended the throne, and his day for brilliance in kingly parts was over. Robert III. also had been past his first vigour when the sceptre came to his hand, and besides, in some early tournament the kick of a horse had lamed and unfitted him for the part of a leader in that active and warlike age. But in James I., perhaps the most accomplished knight and statesman of his time, to say nothing of his poetic gifts, shone forth again with larger lustre the spirit of that gallant Walter Stewart who fought at Bannockburn and Berwick, and whose marriage with the daughter of Bruce brought to his house the inheritance of the Scottish crown. And the deeds and fate of James form a fitting prelude to the reign of a race whose chivalry and misfortunes for three hundred

years, till its final eclipse at Culloden, have made Scottish history read like a romance.

The second son of Robert III. and his queen Annabella, daughter of Sir John Drummond of Stobhall, James was born at Dunfermline in July, 1394. Singularly unfortunate in those who should have been his strongest support, he was indebted for the tragic events which respectively gave him the throne and ended his life to his two uncles, Robert Stewart, Duke of Albany, and Walter Stewart, Earl of Athole. King Robert III. (whose baptismal name, John, had been considered unfortunate for a monarch), incapacitated by disposition and infirmity for strong government, had entrusted the affairs of state to his brother Albany. This nobleman, as bold and ambitious as the king was easy and weak, had not been slow to perceive the possibility thus afforded of carving his own way to the throne. Recently in similar circumstances in England he had seen Richard II. deposed by Henry of Lancaster, and it was more than possible that a like effort would be attended with like success in the north. It was only by a slip in the second step of his enterprise that his calculations defeated their own ends.

Between him and the crown stood the king's elder son, David, Duke of Rothesay, and the young prince James, Earl of Carrick. Upon a plea of dissipation and extravagance, the former, while travelling quietly in Fife, was seized and thrown into Albany's tower of Falkland, where, in spite of the pitying efforts of a poor woman, who, it is said, fed him for a time

through the bars with thin barley cakes and milk from her own bosom, he died horribly of starvation in March, 1402.

Fearful, after this, for the safety of his remaining son, the king first entrusted James to the care of Henry Wardlaw, Bishop of St. Andrews, and afterwards, upon the plea of securing better education, arranged to send him to the court of Charles VI. of France. It illustrates alike the fierceness of the times and the power of the king's brother, that though Albany made no effort to arrest James on his way to the Bass, yet, for a political revenge of his own, he had the prince's escort and kinsman, Sir David Fleming of Cumbernauld, waylaid and slain on returning towards Edinburgh.

Tytler in his *Lives of Scottish Worthies* has left small doubt that Albany intrigued with Henry IV. of England for the capture of the prince at sea. Possibly he calculated upon the perpetual confinement and ultimate death of James. It is known that on his own side he had a strong inducement to offer the English king for the effecting of his purpose. Though the death of Richard II. at Pomfret had been announced, it was rumoured that the deposed king had been recognized in the outer isles of Scotland. The story is one of the last told by Wyntoun. A baron's daughter of Ireland, who had seen Richard in that country, and had married a brother of the Lord of the Isles, had recognized the monarch in the person of a poor wanderer seated by the kitchen fire in her castle. This individual was now at the Scottish court, and his

safe-keeping, or even removal, could be used to bribe or control the action of Henry IV. Albany's intrigue, however, succeeded only in part.

Sailing from the Bass with the second Earl of Orkney and others on board, the prince's ship, though it was in time of truce, was taken by the English off Flamborough Head on Palm Sunday, the 12th of April, 1405. But James was neither slain in the action nor ill-treated afterwards. Though a prisoner, he was furnished with all the education befitting a prince, and in the keeping of Henry was safer by far than he could have been under the wardship of his uncle Albany. The possession of James was valuable to the English king in several ways. By producing him at any time the latter could annul in a day the power of the Scottish regent; the possibility of his doing this could always be used to prevent any exploiting of the claims of Richard II. by Albany; and the retention of the prince in English hands might even be made to minimise Scottish succours to the enemy in the war with France.

It is true that Robert III. died slowly of grief after the news of his son's capture; but to James himself nothing but profit can be said to have accrued from his detention in the south. Imprisoned successively in the Tower, in Nottingham Castle, and at Windsor, his studies were ably supervised by Sir John Pelham, and full opportunity was afforded him of attaining perfection in all the knightly accomplishments of the time. Practice even in the art of war formed part of his curriculum; for, carried by Henry V. to France in

1421, he commanded the English at the siege of Dreux, and it is recorded that by his energy he reduced the town in six weeks. Literature, in particular, is indebted to his imprisonment for the opportunity it afforded of studying the works of the English poets, and for the occasion it furnished for the production of his own greatest poem.

By his own account he had been a captive nearly eighteen years when one morning, looking from his prison lattice into the castle garden at Windsor, he beheld the Lady Jane Beaufort, daughter of the Earl of Somerset, and niece of Henry IV., who became successively the inspiration of his verse, the means of his liberation, and the partner of his throne.

Meanwhile in Scotland the organism of the state and society had been rapidly going to wreck. Albany's policy had been to conciliate the great barons upon whose support he calculated for the retention of power. To this end their gravest misdeeds were overlooked, and in order that they might have no inducement for the restoration of James they were granted large possessions out of the crown lands and revenues. Upon the death of Albany in 1419 the regency descended to the weak hands of his son Murdach, and the state of affairs, already grievous, fast became intolerable. Bands of feudal marauders overran the country, industry was at a standstill, and no man's life was safe. Far from being able to govern the kingdom, the regent appeared unable to control his own sons, and it is said that a gross insult from one of them finally determined him to seek the return

of the king. To the offender he is reported to have said, "Since thou wilt give me neither reverence nor obedience, I will fetch home one whom we must all obey."

This had lately become an easy matter. No English purpose could now be served by the prince's detention. The fear of Richard II. had passed away, and the presence of James on the English side did not prevent the Scottish auxiliaries fighting for France. On the other hand an alliance with the English royal house in the person of the Lady Jane appeared to offer sufficient security for the goodwill of the monarch. Accordingly a ransom of £40,000 in name of maintenance was arranged to be paid; on 2nd February, 1424, the young lovers were married in the church of St. Mary Overy, keeping their wedding feast in the Bishop of Winchester's palace close by; on 1st April they entered Scotland amid great rejoicings; and on 21st May James was crowned at Scone.

Thirty years of age, the king is described as of middle height, with chest broad and full, strong but light in build, an adept in horsemanship, swordsmanship, and all knightly accomplishments, and a master of music, painting, and poetry, while history shows him to have been as resolute in mind as he was active in physique. The historians of that century fill pages with the records of his versatility, and it is known that the fame of his accomplishments spread even to the south of Europe.

Strangely momentous must have been his thoughts

as he came northwards to require an account at the hands of his regent. News of his brother's terrible death must have been one of his earliest impressions. His own seizure and his father's consequent decease, as well as the nineteen years' captivity without attempt at ransom, could not but be burning in his mind. He found the crown all but bankrupt, its revenues plundered, its estates given away. He found Scotland in a state of anarchy, misrule, and licentiousness, the church laid waste, the nobles at war. There was a long account to settle, but the barons, swollen in power, and long accustomed to their own pleasure, were likely ill to brook the interference of a master.

For ten months he waited, unsuspected by the half-contemptuous nobles, silently informing himself of the polity of the country and assuring himself of the support of friends. In order to ascertain the condition of the common people he is even said to have moved about incognito. Then on 12th March, 1425, he summoned a parliament at Perth, and the blow fell. By a sudden mandate were arrested the Duke of Albany and his two sons, with his father-in-law, the Earl of Lennox. These were tried by their peers at Stirling on the 24th and 25th May, convicted of high treason, and forthwith executed on the Heading Hill.

It is greatly to the credit of James that almost by these four executions alone he reduced the country from lawlessness to obedience. Had he been less prompt in action Scotland could scarcely have escaped the horrors of civil war. As it was, his resolution

struck terror to the hearts of the lawless barons, and soon made apparent what he himself declared at Perth, that "no longer were authority, honesty, and virtue to be accounted idle names, nor that reckoned right which was gained and kept by stroke of sword." The Highlands, it is true, continued for some time to give trouble; but even there the king's sharp energy quickly made itself felt, and after overwhelming defeat in a marsh of Lochaber, Alaster Macdonald, Lord of the Isles, was finally reduced to appear, half-naked, in Holyrood Church on an Easter Day and throw himself unreservedly on the monarch's mercy.

It had soon become evident that James had vigorous ideas on the duties of government, and that he meant to carry them out. On coming to Scotland he had vowed that though he himself should lead the life of a dog he would make "the key keep the castle and the bush the cow," and resolutely he kept his word. For thirteen years Scotland enjoyed such justice as had not been known since the regency of Randolph. Arts were promoted, circuit courts were established, and law everywhere impartially administered, while much was done to reform the clergy. Once more as in the days of Malcolm Canmore, in strikingly similar circumstances, civilization had begun to make a fresh growth in the country, when the clouds suddenly darkened round the head of the king.

James had not established law and order without offending many whose license he curtailed. The discontent among these, chiefly the barons, grew in silence for some time. Murmurs, however, at length

began to be heard, and in the parliament of 1435 Sir Robert Graham, whose nephew had been deprived by James of the earldom of Strathearn, is said actually to have laid hands on the king. He was instantly arrested and thrown into prison, but escaping and fleeing to "the country of the wild Scots," he sent a letter to James renouncing his allegiance and swearing mortal revenge whenever this should be in his power. The king in the end of the following year was prosecuting the siege of Roxburgh, then in English hands, when the queen came suddenly to the camp bringing tidings of danger. Her exact information is unrecorded, but it is now known that the old Earl of Athole had become the head of a formidable conspiracy which promised to set his son, Sir Robert Stewart, on the throne. At the queen's tidings James raised the siege of Roxburgh and, mistakenly perhaps, disbanded his army. Resolving to spend Christmas at Perth, he was about to cross the Forth, when a Highland "prophetess" suddenly appeared and warned him that if he crossed that water he should never return alive. The king seemed startled for a moment, and paused, but the warning was finally disregarded. The rest of the story is tragic enough.

The evening of the 20th February, 1437, had been spent gaily by the court in the Blackfriars Monastery at Perth. Music, chess, and the reading of romances had been kept up till a late hour, and the Earl of Athole and his son, Sir Robert Stewart, were among the last courtiers to retire. Before the gates closed the Highland woman had again appeared to seek an

audience of the king, had forced her way even to the chamber door, but had been refused admission by the usher. At midnight, James, in his nightgown and slippers, was standing before the fire chatting pleasantly with the queen and her ladies. Just then a sudden clashing of armour was heard in the garden below, and great flashes of torchlight were cast up against the casements of the windows. At once the king remembered Sir Robert Graham and the warning of the Highland prophetess. There was no time for escape, the assassins were already on their way, and as the king wrenched up the flooring with the tongs and leaped into a sewer-vault below, Catherine Douglas sprang to the door and for lack of a bolt thrust her own arm into the empty staples. All, however, was in vain. The door was burst open, the king's hiding-place discovered, the queen wounded, and James, weaponless, after a terrific struggle with the two first ruffians who leaped down upon him, stabbed and hacked to death by Graham.

Of succeeding events little need be said. Notwithstanding the death of the king the throne remained unshaken. Forty days later, so swift was the queen's pursuit, all the conspirators were captured and put to death with fearful tortures.

Such, in barest outline, is the life of King James I. of Scotland, a life that for romantic and tragic incident and for the illustration of a resolute, lofty, and finished character, has not been surpassed by poetic invention. As a king he proved himself, what the Stewarts not always were, entirely capable for his place and time,

and as a civilizing influence he sowed seeds which have been bearing gentle fruit in the national life for nearly five hundred years. Were it for nothing more than his effect upon the national music he must be entitled to grateful remembrance, many of the sweetest Scottish airs sung to the present day in castle and clachan, being owed, it is believed, to him. But above his fame as a composer and even as a statesman towers his reputation in another realm. King James is likely to remain best known to the world by his work as a poet.

In 1783 Tytler first printed *The Kingis Quair*, or Book, from the only known copy, the Selden MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. His edition, however, though it made the poem available, proved somewhat inaccurate, the transcription having been entrusted to "an ingenious young gentleman," a student of Oxford. The various editions which followed were more or less merely reprints of Tytler's text, and it is to Professor Skeat, in his edition for the Scottish Text Society in 1883, that the first reliable version of the poem is owed. *The Kingis Quair* is in Chaucer's seven-line stanza, called from this use of it Rime Royal. It celebrates the love of the captive prince for the Lady Jane Beaufort, and is understood to have been written by James at Windsor in 1423, the year before his release. Mair in his History of Scotland states that it was written before the king's marriage. From stanza 10, in which the poet speaks of Fortune having been first his foe and afterwards his friend, it is probable that the exact date of composition was soon after the successful issue of his suit.

In the last stanza James acknowledges Chaucer and Gower as his masters in verse, and it is certain that he imbibed from these masters an influence which, carried by his work into the north, was to exert a far-reaching effect upon Scottish poetry. The green branch of southern poesy which James engrafted on the grey bardic stem of Scotland flourished luxuriantly for more than a hundred years, and was hardly all cut down even by the stern pruning-knife of the Reformation. There was more in the royal poet, however, than he got from his masters. They as well as he may be said in the words of one critic to "breathe the romantic and elegant grace which the immense popularity of Petrarch had at that time made the universal pattern throughout Europe." The father of English verse, moreover, was monarch of realms into which the Scottish poet never sought to enter. But, as Mr. Stopford Brooke has said, in *The Kingis Quair* "the natural description is more varied, the colour is more vivid, and there is a modern self-reflective quality which does not belong to Chaucer at all"; and the same writer must be listened to when he declares the work of James to be "sweeter, tenderer, and purer than any verse till we come to Spenser." The allegoric form in which a great part of the poem is written has passed away, it is true, from modern taste; but *The Kingis Quair* possesses perennial qualities which remain as fresh yet as when the verses were penned by the royal prisoner. No poet has ever painted love-longing and the dawn of love more delicately or with subtler artistic touch; no poet has

given a more exquisite impression of the sweet awe and loveliness of womanhood.

As it stands, *The Kingis Quair* places James in the gallery of the world's immortal lovers. Beside Petrarch penning his sonnets to Laura, and the pale Dante gazing on his dead Beatrice, must remain the picture of the captive prince looking forth from his lattice in the tower of Windsor, while below in the garden alleys there lingers for a space, half-consciously, the maid of "beautee eneuch to mak a world to dote."

This, nevertheless, was not the only poem composed by James I. First of all, Mair, who wrote about the year 1500, says that besides "the book concerning the queen," and many songs still popular in his own day, James had written other two compositions beginning respectively with the words "Yas sen" and "At Beltayn." Then, in Bannatyne's MS., written in 1568, the poem of *Christ's Kirk on the Green* has the note appended "Quod K. James the First." And still further, both Dr. Irving and Mr. Skeat print a poem of three stanzas, whose authenticity can hardly be questioned, as it is ascribed to James I. in *The Gude and Godlie Ballates* of 1578, and in *Ane compentious Booke of godly and spiritual Songs*, printed in 1621.

The last of these poems is included in the present volume, but regarding the identity and authenticity of the first three—the compositions beginning with "Yas sen" and "At Beltayn," and the poem of *Christ's Kirk*—grave doubts have been expressed. The only clue to the first two are the words given by Mair, but,

on the strength of these, two compositions printed in Pinkerton's *Ancient Scottish Poems* have been attributed to James—a *Song on Absence* beginning :

Sen that [the] eyne that workis my weifare
Dois no moir on me glance ;

and the well-known *Peblis to the Play*, which begins with :

At Beltane quhen ilk bodie bownis
To Peblis to the Play.

Of *Christ's Kirk on the Green*, printed in the same collection, the only suggestion of James' authorship is Bannatyne's note.

Against the authenticity of the *Song on Absence* and *Peblis to the Play* is remarked the slightness of Mair's evidence. The first words of the former have to be transposed to fit his quotation, while regarding the latter he distinctly affirms that as the king's poem was not accessible, several substitutes had been made ; the opening "At Beltayn," therefore, may be understood to have become hackneyed. Against James' authorship of *Christ's Kirk on the Green* it is observed that the sole authority, Bannatyne, appears to have been careless or confused enough to make a mistake. The next poem but one in his collection he ascribes to "James the Fyift," or as some read it, "the Fyrst," in mistake for James the Fourth, and it is supposed he may have made a similar error with *Christ's Kirk*. Further, it is averred that common tradition previous to the discovery of the Bannatyne MS. invariably ascribed the poem to James V. This tradition is supported by the usage of the early writers, Dempster

in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Bishop Gibson in 1691, and James Watson in 1706. Sibbald in his *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry* may be quoted: "James V. certainly was a writer of verses, as we know from the undoubted testimony of Lindsay, and it appears safer upon the whole in this instance to trust to vulgar tradition than to the *ipse dixit* of Bannatyne, who seems to have had but an indistinct notion of our different kings of the name of James." It has been pointed out that the style and strain of humour both of *Peblis to the Play* and of *Christ's Kirk* are exactly the same as those of *The Gaberlunzieman*, which has always been attributed to James V.; while on the other hand one writer, Guest, in his *English Rhythms*, has said: "One can hardly suppose those critics serious who attribute this song (*Christ's Kirk*) to the moral and sententious James I." Finally, Professor Skeat declares that "if we are to have any regard at all to the language, style, and metre of these poems, we cannot make them earlier than half-a-century or more after 1437." It would seem most fair, therefore, to follow the example of critics like Percy, Warton, Ritson, and Stopford Brooke, and assign the probable authorship both of *Peblis to the Play* and *Christ's Kirk on the Green* to James the Fifth.

It is upon his *Kingis Quair* that the poetic fame of James the First must ultimately depend. By it he is sufficiently proved to be, in the words of Dr. Irving, "a royal poet upon whose character royalty itself could scarcely confer any additional splendour."

ON the plea that *The Kingis Quair* was written in an imitation of Chaucer's dialect, and that the language of the poem therefore was technically imperfect, Mr. Skeat undertook to regulate the lines by addition of words and syllables where he considered requisite. As absolute regularity of rhythm, however, may not have been the poet's intention, only such additions are here inserted (in brackets) as seem necessary for the sense. For most of these, and for the light which its notes frequently cast on the text, indebtedness has to be acknowledged to Mr. Skeat's edition. The poem is here printed complete.

THE KINGIS QUAIR.

Maid be King James of Scotland the First quhen his Maiestie
wes in Ingland.



EIGH in the hevynnis figure circulere
The rody sterres twynklyng as the fyre;
And, in Aquary, Cynthia¹ the clere
Rynsid hir tressis like the goldin wyre,
That late tofore, in fair and fresche atyre,
Through Capricorn heved hir hornis bright,
North northward approachit the myd-nyght;

¹ MS. Citherea.

Quhen as I lay in bed allone waking,
New partit out of slepe a lyte tofore²,
Fell me to mynd of many diuerse thing,
Off this and that; can I noght say quharfore,
Bot slepe for craft in erth myght I no more;
For quhich as tho³ coude I no better wyle,
Bot toke a boke to rede apon a quhile:

² a little before.

³ then.

Off quhich the name is clepit⁴ properly
Boece, eftere him that was the compiloure,
Schewing [the] counsele of philosophye,
Compilit by that noble senatoure

⁴ called.

Off Rome, quhilom⁵ that was the warldis floure,
And from estatē by fortune a quhile
Foriugit⁶ was to pouert⁷ in exile:

⁵ formerly.

⁶ Condemned.
⁷ poverty.

And there to here this worthy lord and clerk,
 His metir suete, full of moralitee ;
 His flourit pen so fair he set a-werk,
 Discryving¹ first of his prosperitee,
 And out of that his infelicitee ;

¹ Describing.

² poetic narrative.

³ began.

And than how he, in his poetly report²,
 In philosophy can³ him to comfort.

⁴ though.

⁵ that.

⁶ stopped.

For quhich, thocht⁴ I in purpose, at my boke,
 To borowe a slepe at thilk⁵ tyme began,
 Or euer I stent⁶, my best was more to loke
 Vpon the writing of this noble man,
 That in him-self the full recouer wan
 Off his infortune, pouert, and distresse,
 And in tham set his verray sekernesse⁷.

⁷ true security.

And so the vertew of his youth before
 Was in his age the ground of his delytis :
 Fortune the bak him turnyt, and therfore
 He maketh ioye and confort, that he quit is
 Off thir vnsekir⁸ warldis appetitis ;
 And so aworth⁹ he takith his penance,
 And of his vertew maid it suffisance :

⁸ these uncertain.
MS. theire.

⁹ worthily.

With mony a noble resoun, as him likit,
 Enditing in his fairë Latyne tong,
 So full of fruyte, and rethorikly pykit¹⁰,
 Quhich to declare my scole¹¹ is ouer yong ;
 Therefore I lat him pas, and, in my tong¹²,
 Procede I will agayn to my sentence
 Off my mater, and leue all incidence.

¹⁰ rhetorically
culled.

¹¹ skull, head.

¹² tongue,
language.

The long nyght beholding, as I saide,
 Myn eyne gan to smert for studying;
 My buke I schet, and at my hede it laide;
 And doune I lay bot¹ ony taryng,
 This matere new in my mynd rolling;
 This is to seyn², how that eche estate,
 As Fortune lykith, thame will [oft] translate.

¹ without.² say.

For sothe it is, that, on hir tolter³ quhele,
 Euery wight cleuerith in his stage⁴,
 And failyng foting oft, quhen hir lest rele,
 Sum vp, sum doune, is none estate nor age
 Ensured, more the pryncē than the page:
 So vncouthly hir werdes⁵ sche deuidith,
 Namly⁶ in youth, that seildin ought prouidith.

³ unstable.⁴ clammers in his rank.⁵ So strangely her fates.⁶ Especially.

Among thir⁷ thoughtis rolling to and fro,
 Fell me to mynd of my fortune and vre⁸;
 In tender youth how sche was first my fo,
 And eft⁹ my frende, and how I gat recure
 Off my distresse, and all myn auenture
 I gan oure-hayle¹⁰, that langer slepe ne rest
 Ne myght I nat, so were my wittis wrest.

⁷ these.⁸ chance.⁹ afterwards.¹⁰ overhaul.

For-wakit and for-walowit¹¹, thus musing,
 Wery, forlyin¹², I lestnyt sodaynlye,
 And sone I herd the bell to matynes ryng,
 And vp I rase, no langer wald I lye:
 Bot now, how trowe ye? suich a fantasye
 Fell me to mynd, that ay me-thoght the bell
 Said to me, "Tell on, man, quhat the befell."

¹¹ Sore waking and sore tossing.¹² tired with lying.

¹ then. Thought I tho¹ to my-self, "Quhat may this be?
 This is myn awin ymagynacioun;
² person. It is no lyf² that spekis vnto me;
 It is a bell, or that impressioun
 Off my thocht causith this illusioun,
³ maketh me think so foolishly. That dooth me think so nycely³ in this wise;"
 And so befell as I schall you deuise.

Determyt furth therewith in myn entent,
 Sen I thus haue ymagynit of this sounē,
 And in my tyme more ink and paper spent
 To lyte effect, I tuke conclusioun
 Sum new thing to write; I set me down,
 And furth-with-all my pen in hand I tuke,
⁴ began. And maid a †, and thus begouth⁴ my buke.

⁵ innocent.
⁶ crude. **T**hou [sely]⁵ youth, of nature indegest⁶,
 Vnrypit fruyte with windis variable;
 Like to the bird that fed is on the nest,
 And can noght flee; of wit wayke and vnstable,
⁷ liable. To fortune both and to infortune hable⁷;
 Wist thou thy payne to cum and thy trauaille,
 For sorow and drede wele myght thou wepe and
 waille.

⁸ stands. Thus stant⁸ thy confort in vnsekernesse,
⁹ guide. And wantis it that suld the reule and gye⁹:
¹⁰ helmlless. Ryght as the schip that sailith sterēles¹⁰
¹¹ must hie to harm. Vpon the rok[kis] most to harmes hye¹¹,
¹² help. For lak of it that suld bene hir supplye¹²;
 So standis thou here in this warldis rage,
 And wantis that suld gyde all thy viage.

I mene this by my-self, as in partye¹;
 Though nature gave me suffisance in youth²,
 The ryphenesse of resoun lak[it] I,
 To gouerne with my will; so lyte I couth³,
 Quhen sterëles to trauaile I begouth⁴,
 Among the wawis of this warld to driue;
 And how the case, anone I will discriue.

- ¹ lament this
 regarding
 myself, as
 participator.
² sufficient reason
 for a youth.
³ so little I could.
⁴ began.

With doutfull hert, among the rokkis blake,
 My feble bote full fast to stere and rowe,
 Helples allone, the wynter nyght I wake,
 To wayte⁵ the wynd that furthward suld me throwe.
 O empti saile! quhare is the wynd suld blowe
 Me to the port, quhar gynneth all my game?
 Help, Calyope, and wynd, in Marye name!

- ⁵ ascertain.
⁶ name.
⁷ MS. doubil-
 nesse.
⁸ maketh.

The rokkis clepe⁶ I the prolixitee
 Off doubtfulness⁷ that doith⁸ my wittis pall:
 The lak of wynd is the deficultee
 In enditing of this lytill tetry small:
 The bote I clepe the mater hole of all:
 My wit vnto the saile that now I wynd,
 To seke connyng⁹, though I bot lytill fynd.

- ⁹ skill.

At my begynnyng first I clepe and call
 To yow, Cleo¹⁰, and to yow, Polymye¹¹,
 With Thesiphone¹², goddis and sistris all,
 In nowmer ix., as bokis specifye;
 In this processe my wilsum¹³ wittis gye;
 And with your bryght lanternis wele conuoye
 My pen, to write my turment and my ioie!

- ¹⁰ Clio, Muse of
 History.
¹¹ Polyhymnia,
 Muse of Song,
 &c.
¹² Thesiphone, a
 Fury mist.
 perh. for a
 Muse.
¹³ wilful.

¹ spring.

In vere¹, that full of vertu is and gude,
 Quhen Nature first begynneth hir enprise,
 That quhilum was be cruell frost and flude
 And schouris scharp opprest in many wyse,

² Cynthus.

And Synthus² [be]gynneth to aryse

³ morning.

Heigh in the est, a morow³ soft and suete,
 Vpward his course to driue in Ariete:

⁴ degrees exactly
(i.e. one hour).
 MS. Passit bot
 midday.

Passit mydday bot fourë greis evin⁴,
 Off lenth and brede his angel wingis bryght
 He spred vpon the ground doune fro the hevin;
 That, for gladnesse and confort of the sight,
 And with the tiklyng of his hete and light,
 The tender flouris opnyt thame and sprad;
 And, in thaire nature, thankit him for glad.

⁵ i.e. nearly ten
 years old.

Noght fer passit the state of innocence,
 Bot nere about the nowmer of yeris thre⁵,
 Were it causit throu hevinly influence
 Off goddis will, or othir casualtee,
 Can I noght say; bot out of my contree,
 By thaire avise that had of me the cure,
 Be see to pas, tuke I myn auenture.

⁶ before.

Puruait of all that was vs necessarye,
 With wynd at will, vp airly by the morowe,
 Streight vnto schip, no longere wold we tarye,
 The way we tuke, the tyme I tald to-forowe⁶;
 With mony "fare wele" and "Sanct Iohne to
 borowe⁷"

⁷ be your secu-
 rity.

Off falowe and frende; and thus with one assent
 We pullit vp saile, and furthoure wayis went.

Vpon the wawis weltering to and fro,
 So infortunate was vs that fremyt¹ day,
 That maugre, playnly, quhethir we wold or no,
 With strong hand, by forse, schortly to say,
 Off inmyis takin and led away
 We weren all, and broght in thaire contree;
 Fortune it schupe² none othir ways to be.

¹ unlucky.² destined.

Quhare as in straye ward and in strong prisoun,
 So fer forth³ of my lyf the heuy lyne,
 Without confort, in sorowe abandoune,
 The secund sistere lukit hath to twyne⁴,
 Nere by the space of yeris twise nyne;
 Till Iupiter his merci list aduert⁵,
 And send confort in relesche⁶ of my smert.

³ far forward.⁴ *i.e.* Lachesis, spinner of life's thread, has seen to it to cut in twain.⁵ pleased to turn.⁶ relief.

Quhare as in ward full oft I wold bewaille
 My dedely lyf, full of peyne and penance,
 Saing ryght thus, "Quhat haue I gilt to faille⁷
 My fredome in this world and my plesance?
 Sen euery wight has thereof suffisance,
 That I behold, and I a creature
 Put from all this—hard is myn auenture!

⁷ done ill to lose.

The bird, the beste, the fisch eke in the see,
 They lyve in fredome euerich⁸ in his kynd;
 And I a man, and lakkith libertee;

⁸ every one.

Quhat schall I seyne⁹, quhat resoun may I fynd,
 That Fortune suld do so?" Thus in my mynd
 My folk I wold argewe¹⁰, bot all for noght;
 Was none that myght, that on my peynes rought.

⁹ say.¹⁰ *i.e.* argue with.

Than wold I say, "Gif God me had deuiseit
¹ pain. To lyve my lyf in thraldome thus and pyne¹,
 Quhat was the cause that he [me] more comprisit
² ruin. Than othir folk to lyve in suich ruyne²?
³ i.e. when alone, I suffer allone amang the figuris nyne³,
 as cipher among the nine
⁴ give help. Ane wofull wrecche that to no wight may spede⁴,
⁵ person's. And yit of euery lyvis⁵ help hath nede."

The long dayes and the nyghtis eke
 I wold bewaille my fortune in this wise,
 For quhich, agane distresse confort to seke,
 My custum was on mornis for to ryse
 Airly as day; O happy excercise!
 By the come I to ioye out of turment.
 Bot now to purpose of my first entent:—

Bewailing in my chamber thus allone,
 Despeired of all ioye and remedye,
⁶ Full weary. For-tirit⁶ of my thocht, and wo-begone,
⁷ MS. And to. Unto⁷ the wyndow gan I walk in hye⁸,
⁸ haste. To se the warld and folk that went forby;
 As for the tyme, though I of mirthis fude
 Myght haue no more, to luke it did me gude.

Now was there maid fast by the touris wall
 A gardyn faire, and in the corneris set
⁹ shrubbery. Ane herbere⁹ grene, with wandis long and small
 Railit about; and so with treis set
 Was all the place, and hawthorn hegis knet,
¹⁰ person. That lyf¹⁰ was none walking there forby¹¹,
¹¹ past. That myght within scarce ony wight aspye.

So thik the bewis¹ and the leues grene
 Beschadit all the aleyes that there were,
 And myddis euery where myght be sene
 The schair suetë ienepere,
 Growing thair with branchis here and there,
 That, as semyt to a lyf without,
 The bewis spred the herbere all about;

¹ boughs.

And on the small grenë twistis² sat
 The lytill suetë nyghtingale, and song
 So loud and clere, the ympnis³ consecrat
 Off lufis vse, now soft, now lowd among⁴,
 That all the gardyng and the wallis rong
 Ryght of thaire song and of the copill⁵ next
 Off thaire suete armony, and lo the text:

² twigs.³ hymns.⁴ at times.⁵ couplet. MS.
on the copill.

[CANTUS.]

“Worschippë, ye that loueris bene, this May,
 For of your blisse the kalendis are begonñe,
 And sing with vs, away, Winter, away!
 Cum, Somer, cum, the suete sesoun and sonne!
 Awake for schame! that haue your hevynnis wonne,
 And amorously lift vp your hedis all,
 Thank Lufe that list⁶ you to his merci call.”

⁶ is pleased.

Quhen thai this song had song a lytill thrawe⁷,
 Thai stent⁸ a quhile, and therewith vnaffraid,
 As I beheld and kest myn eyne a-lawe⁹,
 From beugh to beugh thay hippit and thai plaid,
 And freschly in thaire birdis kynd arraid
 Thaire fetheris new, and fret thame in the sonne,
 And thankit Lufe, that had thaire makis¹⁰ wonne.

⁷ space.⁸ stopped.⁹ below.¹⁰ mates.

This was the planē ditee of thaire note,
 And there-with-all vnto my-self I thocht,
 “Quhat lyf¹ is this, that makis birdis dote?
 Quhat may this be, how cummyth it of ought?
 Quhat nedith it to be so dere ybought?
 It is nothing, trowe I, bot feynit chere,
 And that men list to counterfeten chere.”

² Afterwards. Eft² wald I think; “O Lord, quhat māy this be?
 That Lufe is of so noble myght and kynde,
 Lufing his folk, and suich prosperitee
 Is it of him, as we in bukis fynd?
³ make fast. May he oure hertes setten³ and vnbynd?
 Hath he vpon oure hertis suich maistrye?
 Or all this is bot feynyt fantasye!

For gif he be of so grete excellence,
 That he of euery wight hath cure and charge,
 Quhat haue I gilt to him or doon offense,
 That I am thrall, and birdis gone at large,
⁴ Since. Sen⁴ him to serue he myght set my corage?
⁵ say. And gif he be noght so, than may I seyne⁵,
 Quhat makis folk to iangill of him in veyne?

Can I noght elles fynd, bot gif that he
 Be lord, and as a god may lyue and regne,
 To bynd and louse, and maken thrallis free,
 Than wold I pray his blisfull grace benigne,
⁶ fit. To hable⁶ me vnto his seruice digne⁷;
⁷ worthy. And euermore for to be one of tho
 Him trewly for to serue in wele and wo.

And there-with kest I doune myn eye ageyne,
 Quhare as I sawe, walking vnder the toure,
 Full secretly, new cummyn hir to pleyne¹,
 The fairest or the freschest yong floure }
 That euer I sawe, me-thoght, before that }houre,
 For quich sodayn abate, anone astert
 The blude of all my body to my hert.

And though I stude abaisit tho a lyte²,
 No wonder was; for quhy, my wittis all
 Were so ouercome with plesance and delyte,
 Onely throu latting of myn eyën fall,
 That sudaynly my hert became hir thrall
 For euer, of free wyll; for of manace
 There was no takyn³ in hir suetë face.

And in my hede I drewe ryght hastily,
 And eft-sonës⁴ I lent it forth ageyne,
 And sawe hir walk, that verray womanly,
 With no wight mo, bot onely wommen tueyne.
 Than gan I studye in my-self, and seyne,
 "A! suete, ar ye a warldly creature,
 Or hevinly thing in likenesse of nature?"

Or ar ye god Cupidis owin princesse,
 And cummyn are to louse me out of band?
 Or ar ye verray⁵ Nature the goddesses,
 That haue depayntit with your hevinly hand
 This gardyn full of flouris, as they stand?
 Quhat sall I think, allace! quhat reuerence
 Sall I minister⁶ to your excellence?

Gif ye a goddesse be, and that ye like

¹ avoid.

To do me payne, I may it noght astert¹;

² maketh mesigh.

Gif ye be warldly wight, that dooth me sike²,

³ Why pleased.

Quhy lest³ God mak you so, my derrest hert,

⁴ innocent.

To do a sely⁴ prisoner thus smert,

⁵ knows.

That lufis yow all, and wote⁵ of noght bot wo?

And therefor, merci, suete! sen it is so."

⁶ while.

Quhen I a lytill thrawe⁶ had maid my moon,

Bewailing myn infortune and my chance,

Vnknawin how or quhat was best to doon,

So ferre i-fallyng into lufis dance,

That sodeynly my wit, my contenance,

My hert, my will, my nature, and my mynd,

Was changit clene ryght in ane-othir kynd.

Off hir array the forme gif I sall write,

Toward hir goldin haire and rich atyre

⁷ trimmed.

In fret-wise couchit⁷ [was] with perllis quhite

⁸ Balassian

rubies glowing.

And gretë balas lemyng⁸ as the fyre,

With mony ane emeraut and faire saphire;

And on hir hede a chaplet fresch of hewe,

Off plumys partit rede, and quhite, and blewe;

Full of quaking spangis bryght as gold,

⁹ forget-me-not(?)

Forgit of schap like to the amorettis⁹,

So new, so fresch, so plesant to behold,

¹⁰ great St. John's-
wort flower.

The plumys eke like to the floure-ionettis¹⁰,

¹¹ "a sort of
curled tuft."
MS. repeats
"floure-
ionettis."

And othir of schap like to the [round crokettis],¹¹

And, aboue all this, there was, wele I wote,

Beautee eneuch to mak a world to dote. }

About hir nek, quhite as the fyre amaille¹,

¹ enamel made
by fire.

A gudely cheyne of smale orfeurye²,

² gold work.

Quhareby there hang a ruby, without faille,

Lyke to ane hert schapin verily,

That, as a sperk of lowe³, so wantonly

³ flame.

Semyt birnyng vpon hir quhytë throte;

Now gif there was gud partye⁴, God it wote!

⁴ a good partner.
Fr. *partie*.

And for to walk that freschë Mayes morowe,

Ane huke⁵ sche had vpon hir tissew⁶ quhite,

⁵ loose upper
dress.

That gudeliare had noght bene sene toforowe⁷,

⁶ thin under-
garment.

As I suppose; and girt sche was a lyte.

⁷ before.

Thus halflyng⁸ louse for haste, to suich delyte

⁸ partly.

It was to see hir youth in gudelihede,

That for rudenes to speke thereof I drede.

In hir was youth, beautee, with humble apert⁹,

⁹ demeanour.

Bountee, riches, and wommanly facture¹⁰,

¹⁰ fashioning.

God better wote than my pen can report.

Wisedome, largesse, estate, and connyng¹¹ sure

¹¹ skill.

In euery poynt so guydit hir mesure,

In word, in dede, in schap, in contenance,

That nature myght no more hir childe auance.

Throw quhich anone I knew and vnderstude

Wele, that sche was a warldly creature;

On quhom to rest myn eyë, so mich gude

It did my wofull hert, I yow assure,

That it was to me ioye without mesure;

And, at the last, my luke vnto the hevin

I threwe furthwith, and said thir versis¹² sevin:

¹² these lines.

¹ made a star.

“O Venus clere! of goddis stellifyt!¹
 To quhom I yelde homage and sacrifice,
 Fro this day forth your grace be magnifyt,
 That me ressaut haue in suich [a] wise,
 To lyve vnder your law and do seruise;
 Now help me furth, and for your merci lede
 My hert to rest, that deis nere for drede.”

² stopped a little
space.

³ afterwards.

Quhen I with gude entent this orisoun
 Thus endit had, I stynt a lytill stound²;
 And eft³ myn eye full pitously adoune
 I kest, behalding vnto hir lytill hound,
 That with his bellis playit on the ground;
 Than wold I say, and sigh there-with a lyte,
 “A! wele were him that now were in thy plyte!”

Ane-othir quhile the lytill nyghtingale,
 That sat apon the twiggis, wold I chide,
 And say ryght thus, “Quhare are thy notis smale,
 That thou of loue has song this morowe-tyde?
 Seis thou noght hire that sittis the besyde?
 For Venus sake, the blisfull goddesse clere,
 Sing on agane, and mak my lady chere.

⁴ Progne, wife
of Tereus,
changed to a
swallow.

And eke I pray, for all the paynes grete,
 That, for the loue of Proigne⁴ thy sister dere,
 Thou sufferit quhilom, quhen thy brestis wete
 Were with the teres of thyne eyen clere,
 All bludy ronne; that pitee was to here
 The crueltee of that vnknyghtly dede,
 Quhare was fro the bereft thy maidenhede,

Lift vp thyne hert, and sing with gude entent;
 And in thy notis suete the tresone telle,
 That to thy sister trewe and innocent
 Was kythit¹ by hir husband false and fell;
 For quhois gilt, as it is worthy wel,
 Chide thir husbandis that are false, I say,
 And bid thame mend, in the twenty deuil way².

O lytill wrecch, allace! maist thou noght se
 Quho commyth yond? Is it now tyme to wring³?³ grieve.
 Quhat sory thoght is fallin vpon the?
 Opyn thy throte; hastow no lest⁴ to sing?
 Allace! sen thou of resone had felyng,
 Now, suetë bird, say ones to me 'pepe:'
 I dee for wo: me-think thou gynnis slepe.

Hastow no mynde of lufe? Quhare is thy make?
 Or artow seke, or smyt with ielousye?
 Or is sche dede, or hath sche the forsake?
 Quhat is the cause of thy malancolye,
 That thou no more list⁵ maken melodye?
 Sluggart, for schame! lo here thy goldin houre,
 That worth were hale⁶ all thy lyvis laboure!

Gyf thou suld sing wele euer in thy lyve,
 Herë is, in fay⁷, the tyme, and eke the space:
 Quhat wostow than⁸? sum bird may cum and stryve⁸
 In song with the, the maistry to purchase.
 Suld thou than cesse, it were grete schame, allace!
 And here, to wyn gree⁹ happily for euer,
 Here is the tyme to syng, or ellis neuer."

¹ shown.² i.e. in every possible way.
MS. xxy.⁴ hast thou no desire.⁵ art pleased to.⁶ wholly.⁷ in faith.⁸ What knowest thou then?⁹ degree, superiority.

I thought eke thus, gif I my handis clap,

¹ throw forth (a sound).

Or gif I cast¹, than will sche flee away ;

And gif I hald my pes, than will sche nap ;

² knows.

And gif I crye, sche wate² noght quhat I say :

Thus, quhat is best, wate I noght be this day :

{ Bot, blawe wynd, blawe, and do the leuis schake,
That sum twig may wag, and mak hir to wake.

³ MS. he.

With that anone ryght sche³ toke vp a sang,

Quhare come anone mo birdis and alight ;

Bot than, to here the mirth was thame amang,

⁴ Above that too.

Ouer that to⁴, to see the suetë sicht

Off hyr ymage, my spirit was so light,

Me-thoght I flawe for ioye without arest,

⁵ bound all too fast.

So were my wittis boundin all to fest⁵.

And to the notis of the philomene,

⁶ Which.

Quhilkis⁶ sche sang, the ditee there I maid

Direct to hire that was my hertis quene,

Withoutin quhom no songis may me glade ;

And to that sanct, [there] walking in the schade,

My bedis thus, with humble hert entere,

Deuotly [than] I said on this manere.

⁷ have pity.

“ Quhen sall your merci rew⁷ vpon your man,

⁸ unknown.

Quhois seruice is yit vncouth⁸ vnto yow ?

⁹ Since.

Sen⁹, quhen ye go, ther is noght ellis than¹⁰

¹⁰ then.

¹¹ that.

Bot; ‘Hert! quhere as¹¹ the body may noght throu¹²,

¹² may not go through.

Folow thy hevin! Quho suld be glad bot thou¹³,

¹³ i.e. thou, O heart!

That suich a gyde to folow has vndertake?

¹⁴ refuse thou not. Were it throu hell, the way thou noght forsake¹⁴!”

And efter this the birdis euerichone¹ 1 every one.
 Tuke vp ane-othir sang full loud and clere,
 And with a voce said, "Wele is vs begone², 2 Well has it
happed with us.
 That with oure makis³ are togider here; 3 mates.
 We proyne⁴ and play without dout and dangere, 4 preen.
 All clothit in a soyte⁵ full fresch and newe, 5 in one suit.
 In lufis seruice besy, glad, and trewe.

And ye, fresche May, ay mercifull to bridis,
 Now welcum be ye, floure of monethis all;
 For noght onely your grace vpon vs bydis⁶, 6 abides.
 Bot all the warld to witnes this we call,
 That strowit hath so playnly ouer all
 With new freschë suete and tender grene,
 Oure lyf, oure lust⁷, oure gouernoure, oure quene." 7 delight.

This was thair song, as semyt me full heye⁸, 8 loud.
 With full mony vncouth suete note and schill⁹, 9 shrill.
 And therewith-all that faire¹⁰ vpward hir eye 10 fair one.
 Wold cast amang¹¹, as it was Goddis will, 11 at times.
 Quhare I myght se, standing allane full still,
 The faire facture¹² that nature, for maistrye¹³, 12 workmanship.
13 as a master-
piece.
 In hir visage wroght had full lufingly.

And, quhen sche walkit had a lytill thrawe¹⁴ 14 while.
 Vnder the suetë grenë bewis bent¹⁵, 15 bended boughs.
 Hir faire fresche face, as quhite as ony snawe,
 Scho turnyt has, and furth hir wayis went;
 Bot tho¹⁶ began myn axis¹⁷ and turment, 16 then.
17 fever.
 To sene hir part¹⁸, and folowe I na myght;
 Me-thoght the day was turnyt into nyght. 18 see her depart.

Than said I thus, "Quhare-to lyve I langer?

Wofullest wicht, and subiect vnto payne!

¹ God knows,
yea.

Of payne? no! God wote, ya¹: for thay no stranger

² these (pains)
no more
strongly may
afflict.

May wirken² ony wight, I dare wele seyne.

³ at once.

How may this be, that deth and lyf, bothe tueyne,

Sall bothe atonis³ in a creature

Togidder duell, and turment thus nature?

I may noght ellis done bot wepe and waile,

⁴ locked.

With-in thir cald wallis thus i-lokin⁴;

From hennsfurth my rest is my trauaile;

My dryë thirst with teris sall I slokin,

And on my-self bene al my harmys wrokin:

⁵ remedy.
⁶ unless.

Thus bute⁵ is none; bot⁶ Venus, o^f hir grace,

⁷ prepare.
⁸ make my spirit
pass.

Will schape⁷ remede, or do my spirit pace⁸.

As Tantalus I trauaile, ay but-les,

⁹ alike.

That euer ylikë⁹ hailith at the well

Water to draw with buket botemles,

And may noght spede; quhois penance is ane hell:

¹⁰ regarding.

So by¹⁰ my-self this tale I may wele telle,

For vnto hir that herith noght I pleyne;

Thus like to him my trauaile is in veyne."

So sore thus sighit I with my-self alone,

That turnyt is my strenth in febilnesse,

¹¹ foes.

My wele in wo, my frendis all in fone¹¹;

My lyf in deth, my lyght into dirknesse,

¹² certainty.

My hope in feer, in dout my sekirnesse¹²;

¹³ may God con-
voy her.

Sen sche is gone: and God mote hir conuoye¹³,

That me may gyde to turment and to ioye!

The long day thus gan I pry and poure,
 Till Phebus endit had his bemes bryght,
 And bad go farewele euery lef and floure,
 This is to say, approch gan the nyght,
 And Esperus his lampis gan to light;
 Quhen in the wyndow, still as any stone,
 I bade¹ at lenth, and, kneling, maid my mone.

¹ abode.

So lang till evin, for lak of myght and mynd,
 For-wepit and for-pleynit² pitously,
 Ourset so sorow had bothe hert and mynd,
 That to the cold stone my hede on wrye³
 I laid, and lent, amaisit verily,
 Half sleping and half suoune, in suich a wise:
 And quhat I met, I will you now deuise⁴.

² weary with weeping and plaining.³ awry.⁴ describe.

Me-thoght that thus all sodeynly a lyght
 In at the wyndow come quhare that I lent,
 Off quhich the chambere-wyndow schone full bryght,
 And all my body so it hath ouerwent,
 That of my sicht the vertew hale iblent⁵;
 And that with-all a voce vnto me saide,
 "I bring the confort and hele⁶, be noght affrayde."⁶ healing.

⁵ the whole power was lost.

And furth anone it passit sodeynly,
 Quher it come in, the ryght way ageyne,
 And sone, me-thoght, furth at the dure in hye⁷
 I went my weye, nas nothing me ageyne⁸;
 And hastily, by bothe the armes tueyne,
 I was araisit vp in-to the aire,
 Clippit⁹ in a cloude of cristall clere and faire.

⁷ haste.⁸ nor was there anything hindering me.⁹ Embraced.

Ascending vpward ay fro spere to spere,
 Through aire and watere and the hotë fyre,
 Till that I come vnto the circle clere

¹ *i.e.* the sphere
 of the zodiac.
² clear.

Off Signifere¹, quhare fairë, bryght, and schire²,
 The signis schone; and in the glade empire
 Off blisfull Venus, [quhar] ane cryit now
 So sudaynly, almost I wist nocht how.

Off quhich the place, quhen I come there nye,
 Was all, me-thocht, of cristall stonis wroght,
 And to the port I liftit was in hye,

³ *i.e.* in a trice,
 as one may say.

Quhare sodaynly, as quho sais at a thocht³,
 It opnyt, and I was anon in broght

⁴ spacious.

Within a chamber, largë, rowm⁴, and faire;

⁵ concourse.

And there I fand of peple grete repaire⁵.

This is to seyne, that present in that place

Me-thocht I sawe of euery nacioun
 Loueris that endit [had] thaire lyfis space

In lovis seruice, mony a mylioun,

⁶ adventures.

Off quhois chancis⁶ maid is mencioun
 In diuerse bukis, quho thame list to se;
 And therefore here thaire namys lat I be.

The quhois auenture and grete labouris

Aboue thaire hedis writin there I fand;

⁷ *i.e.* for love.

This is to seyne, martris and confessouris⁷,

⁸ mate.

Ech in his stage, and his make⁸ in his hand;

And therewith-all thir peple sawe I stand,

⁹ MS. solempnt.

With mony a solempnit⁹ contenance,

¹⁰ As Love chose
 to advance
 them.

After as Lufe thame lykit to auance¹⁰.

Off gude folkis, that faire in lufe befill¹,
 There saw I sitt in order by thame one²
 With hedis hore; and with thame stude Gude-will
 To talk and play. And after that anone
 Besyde thame and next there saw I gone³
 Curage, amang the freschë folkis yong,
 And with thame playit full merily and song.

¹ befell.² by themselves.³ go about.

And in ane-othir stage, endlong⁴ the wall,
 There saw I stand, in capis wyde and lang,
 A full grete nowmer; bot thaire hudis all,
 Wist I noght quhy, atoure⁵ thair eyën hang;
 And ay to thame come Repentance amang⁶,
 And maid thame chere, degysit in his wede⁷.
 And downward efter that yit I tuke hede.

⁴ along.⁵ over.⁶ at times.⁷ disguised in
dress.

Ryght ouerthwert⁸ the chamber was there drawe
 A trevesse⁹ thin and quhite, all of plesance,
 The quhich behynd, standing, there I sawe
 A world of folk, and by thaire contenance
 Thaire hertis semyt full of displesance,
 With billis in thaire handis, of one assent
 Vnto the iuge thaire playntis to present.

⁸ athwart.⁹ curtain.

And there-with-all apperit vnto me
 A voce, and said, "Tak hede, man, and behold:
 Yonder¹⁰ thou seis the hiest stage and gree¹¹
 Off agit folk, with hedis hore and olde;
 Yone were the folke that neuer changë wold⁷
 In lufe, bot trewly seruit him alway,
 In euery age, vnto thaire ending-day.

¹⁰ MS. Yonder
there.¹¹ degree.

For fro the tyme that thai coud vnderstand

¹ The practice,
the skill of the
craft of love.
² alive.

The exercise, of lufis craft the cure¹,
Was none on lyve² that toke so moch on hand
For lufis saké, nor langer did endure
In lufis seruice; for, man, I the assure,
Quhen thay of youth ressauit had the fill,
Yit in thaire age thame lakkit no gude will.

Here bene also of suich as in counsailis

³ memory.

And all thar dedis, were to Venus trewe;
Here bene the princis, faucht the grete batailis,
In mynd³ of quhom ar maid the bukis newe,
Here bene the poetis that the sciencis knewe,
Throwout the warld, of lufe in thaire suete layes,
Suich as Ouide and Omere in thaire dayes.

And efter thame downe in the next stage,

⁴ where.

There as⁴ thou seis the yong folkis pleye:
Lo! thise were thay that, in thaire myddill age,
Seruandis were to Lufe in mony weye,
And diuersely happinnit for to deye;
Sum soroufully, for wanting of thare makis⁵,
And sum in armes for thaire ladyes sakis.

⁵ mates.

And othir eke by othir diuerse chance,

⁶ a why, a reason.

⁷ i.e. too much
love.

As happin folk all day, as ye may se;
Sum for dispaire, without recouerance;
Sum for desyre, surmounting thaire degree;
Sum for dispite and othir inmytee;
Sum for vnkyndenes without a quhy⁶;
Sum for to moch⁷, and sum for ielousye.

And efter this, vpon yone stage adoun¹, ¹ MS. down.
 Tho that thou seis stond in capis wyde ;
 Yone were quhilum² folk of religioun, ² once.
 That from the world thaire gouernance³ did hide, ³ conduct.
 And frely seruit lufe on euery syde
 In secrete, with thaire bodyis and thaire gudis.
 And lo ! quhy so thai hingen doune thaire hudis :

For though that thai were hardy at assay⁴, ⁴ stout in trial.
 And did him seruice quhilum priuely,
 Yit to the warldis eye it semyt nay ;
 So was thaire seruice half [bot] cowardy :
 And for thay first forsuke him opynly,
 And efter that thereof had repenting,
 For schame thaire hudis oure thaire eyne thay hyng.

And seis thou now yone multitude, on rawe⁵ ⁵ in a row.
 Standing, behynd yone trauerse of delyte ?
 Sum bene of thame that haldin were full lawe,
 And take by frendis, nothing thay to wyte⁶, ⁶ blame.
 In youth from lufe into the cloistere quite ;
 And for that cause are cummyn, recounsilit⁷, ⁷ i.e. reunited to
their mates.
 On thame to pleyne that so thame had begilit.

And othir bene amongis thame also,
 That cummyn ar to court, on Lufe to pleyne⁸, ⁸ complain.
 For he thaire bodyes had bestowit so,
 Quhare bothe thaire hertes gruchit⁹ ther-ageyne ; ⁹ repined. MS.
gruch.
 For quich, in all thaire dayes, soth to seyne¹⁰, ¹⁰ truth to say.
 Quhen othir lyvit in ioye and [in] plesance,
 Thaire lyf was noght bot care and repentance ;

And, quhare thaire hertis gevin were and set,
 Were coplit with othir that coud nocht accord;
 Thus were thai wrangit that did no forfet¹,
 Departing² thame that neuer wold discord.
 Off yong ladies faire, and mony lord,
 That thus by maistry were fro thair chose dryve³,
 Full redy were thaire playntis there to gyve."

¹ misdeed.² Separating.³ driven from
their choice.

And othir also I sawe compleynnyng there
 Vpon Fortune and hir grete variance,
 That, quhere in loue so wele they coplit were,
 With thaire suete makis coplit in plesance,
 Sche⁴ sodeynly maid thaire disseuerance,
 And tuke thame of this warldis companye,
 Withoutin cause, there was none othir quhy⁵.

⁴ MS. So.⁵ reason.

And in a chiere of estate besyde,
 With wingis bright, all plumyt, bot his face,
 There sawe I sitt the blynd god Cupide,
 With bow in hand, that bent full redy was,
 And by him hang thre arowis in a cas,
 Off quhich the hedis grundyn were full ryght,
 Off diuerse metals forgit faire and bryght.

And with the first, that hedit is of gold,
 He smytis soft, and that has esy cure;
 The secund was of siluer, mony-fold
 Wers⁶ than the first, and harder auenture;
 The thrid, of stele, is schot without recure⁷;
 And on his long yalow lokkis schene⁸
 A chaplet had he all of levis grene.

⁶ Worse.⁷ recovery.⁸ bright.

And in a retere lytill of compas,
 Depeyntit¹ all with sighis wonder sad,
 Noght suich sighis as hertis doith manace²,
 Bot suich as dooth lufaris to be glad,
 Fond I Venus vpon hir bed, that had
 A mantill cast ouer hir schuldris quhite:
 Thus clothit was the goddesse of delyte.

¹ Painted.

² makes menace
to hearts.

Stude at the dure Fair-calling, hir vschere,
 That coude his office doon in connyng wise,
 And Secrete, hir thrifty chamberere,
 That besy was in tyme to do seruise,
 And othir mo that I can noght on auise³;
 And on hir hede, of rede rosis full suete,
 A chapellet sche had, faire, fresch, and mete.

³ more, of whom
I cannot tell.

With quaking hert astonate of that sight,
 Vnnethis⁴ wist I quhat that I suld seyne;
 Bot at the last febily, as I myght,
 With my handis on bothe my kneis tueyne,
 There I begouth my caris to compleyne;
 With ane humble and lamentable chere
 Thus salute I that goddesse bryght and clere:

⁴ Scarcely.

"Hye Quene of Lufe! sterre of beneuolence!
 Pitouse princes, and planet merciable⁵!
 Appesare of malice and violence!
 By vertew pure of your aspectis hable⁶,
 Vnto youre grace lat now bene acceptable
 My pure request, that can no forthir gone
 To seken help, bot vnto yow allone!

⁵ merciful.

⁶ powerful.

As ye that bene the socoure and suete well
 Off remedye, of carefull hertes cure,
 And, in the hugë weltering wawis fell
 Off lufis rage, blisfull havin and sure ;
 O anker and keye of our gude auenture,
¹ conquered. Ye haue your man with his gude-will conquest¹:
 Merci, therefore, and bring his hert to rest !

Ye know the cause of all my peyneſ smert
 Bet than my-self, and all myn auenture
 Ye may conuoye, and as yow list, conuert
 The hardest hert that formyt hath nature :
² wholly. Sen in your handis all hale² lyith my cure,
 Haue pitee now, O bryght blisfull goddesse,
³ poor servant. ⁴ have pity on. Off your pure man³, and rew⁴ on his distresse !

And though I was vnto your lawis strange,
 By ignorance, and noght by felonye,
 And that your grace now likit hath to change
 My hert, to seruen yow perpetualeye,
⁵ prepare. Forgiue all this, and shapith⁵ remedye
 To sauen me of your benignë grace,
⁶ make me die. Or do me steruen⁶ furth-with in this place.

And with the stremes of your Percyng lyght
 Conuoy my hert, that is so wo-begone,
 Ageyne vnto that suetë hevinly sight,
 That I, within the wallis cald as stone,
⁷ in the morning. So suetly saw on morow⁷ walk and gone,
 Law in the gardyn, ryght tofore myn eye :
 Now, merci, Quene ! and do me noght to deye.”

Thir wordis said, my spirit in dispaire,
 A quhile I stynt, abiding efter grace¹:
 And there-with-all hir cristall eyen faire
 Sche² kest asyde, and efter that a space,
 Benignely sche turnyt has hir face
 Towardis me full pleasantly conueide;
 And vnto me ryght in this wise sche seide:

¹ stopped, waiting to find grace.

² MS. Me.

“Yong man, the cause of all thyne inward sorowe
 Is noght vnknawin to my deite,
 And thy request, bothe now and eke toforowe³,
 Quhen thou first maid professioun to me;
 Sen of my grace I haue inspirit the
 To knawe my lawe, contynew furth, for oft,
 There as I mynt⁴ full sore, I smyte bot soft.

³ formerly.

⁴ There where I aim.

Paciently thou tak thyne auenture,
 This will my sone Cupide, and so will I,
 He can the stroke, to me langis⁵ the cure
 Quhen I se tyme, and therefor humily
 Abyde, and serue, and lat Gude-hope the gye⁶:
 Bot, for I haue thy forehede here present,
 I will the schewe the more of myn entent.

⁵ belongs.

⁶ guide thee.

This is to say, though it to me pertene
 In lufis lawe the septré to gouerne,
 That the effectis of my bemes schene⁷
 Has thaire aspectis by ordynance eterne,
 With otheris bynden, mynes to discerne,
 Quhilum in thingis bothe to cum and gone,
 That langis noght to me, to writh allone⁸;

⁷ bright.

⁸ *i.e.* My means of discernment, past and future, are bound up with others' (powers); control belongs not to me alone.
 MS. bind and.

- As in thyne awin case now may thou se,
 For-quhy¹ lo, that [by] otheris influence²
 Thy persone standis noght in libertee;
 Quharefore, though I geve the beneuolence,
 It standis noght yit in myn aduertence³,
 Till certeyne coursis endit be and ronne,
 Quhill⁴ of trew seruis thow have hir graice i-wone.

- And yit, considering the nakitnesse
 Bothe of thy wit, thy persone, and thy myght,
 It is no mach, of thyne vnworthynesse
 To hir hie birth, estate, and beautee bryght:
 Als like ye bene, as day is to the nyght;
 Or sek-cloth is vnto fyne cremesye⁵;
 Or doken to the freschē dayesye.

- Vnlike the mone is to the sonnē schene⁶;
 Eke Ianuarye is vnlike to May⁷;
 Vnlike the kukkow to the phylomene;
 Thaire tabartis⁸ ar noght bothe maid of array⁹;
 Vnlike the crow is to the papē-ia¹⁰;
 Vnlike, in goldsmythis werk, a fischis eye
 To peire¹¹ with perll, or maked be so heyne.

- As I haue said, vnto me belangith
 Specialy the cure of thy seknesse;
 Bot now thy matere so in balance hangith,
 That it requerith, to thy sekernesse¹²,
 The help of othir mo that¹³ bene goddes,
 And haue in thame the menes and the lore,
 In this matere to schorten with thy sore¹⁴.

¹ For which reason.
² *i.e.* other planet's influence.

³ control.

⁴ Until.

⁵ crimson cloth.

⁶ bright.

⁷ MS. like unto May.

⁸ coats of arms.

⁹ arrayed alike.

¹⁰ parrot.

¹¹ compare.
 MS. pererese.

¹² assurance.

¹³ MS. than.

¹⁴ *i.e.* to shorten thy woe with.

And for thou sall se wele that I entend,
 Vn-to thy help, thy weelfare to preserue,
 The streight weye thy spirit will I send
 To the goddesse that clepit is Mynerue,
 And se that thou hir hestis wele conserue,
 For in this case sche may be thy supplye¹,
 And put thy hert in rest, als wele as I.

¹ help.

Bot, for the way is vncouth vnto the²,
 There as hir duelling is and hir soierne,
 I will that Gude-hope seruand to the be,
 Youre alleris frend³, to let the to murn⁴,
 Be thy condyt and gyde till thou returne,
 And hir besech that sche will, in thy nede,
 Hir counsele geve to thy weelfare and spede,

² unknown to thee.³ Friend of you all.⁴ to prevent thy mourning.

And that sche will, as langith hir office,
 Be thy gude lady, help and conseiloure,
 And to the schewe hir rype and gude auise⁵,
 Throw quhich thou may, be processe and laboure,
 Atteyne vnto that glad and goldyn floure,
 That thou wald haue so fayn with all thy hart.
 And forthir-more, sen thou hir seruand art,

⁵ advice.

Quhen thou descendis doune to ground ageyne,
 Say to the men that there bene resident,
 How long think thay to stand in my disdeyne,
 That in my lawis bene so negligent
 From day to day, and list thame noght repent,
 Bot breken louse, and walken at thaire large?
 Is nocht eft none⁶ that thereof gevis charge?

⁶ There is not even one.

And for," quod sche, "the angir and the smert
 Off thaire vnkyndēnesse dooth me constreyne.
 My femynyne and wofull tender hert,
 That than I wepe; and, to a token pleyne,
 As of my teris cummyth all this reyne,
 That ye se on the ground so fast ybete
 Fro day to day, my turment is so grete.

¹ cease at another time. And quhen I wepe, and stynten othir quhile¹,

For pacience that is in womanhede,
 Than all my wrath and rancoure I exile;
 And of my cristall teris that bene scheде,
 The hony flouris growen vp and sprede,
² pray. That preyen² men, in thaire flouris wise,
 Be trewe of lufe, and worschip my seruise.

And eke, in takin of this pitouse tale,
 Quhen so my teris dropen on the ground,
 In thaire nature the lytill birdis smale

³ space of time. Styntith thaire song, and murnyth for that stound³.

And all the lightis in the hevin round

⁴ compassion. Off my greuance haue suich compaciencie⁴,
 That from the ground they hidden thaire presence.

And yit in tokenyng forthir of this thing,
 Quhen flouris springis, and freschest bene of hewe,
 And that the birdis on the twistis sing,

⁵ MS. to renew. At thilkē tyme ay gynnen folk renewe⁵

That seruis vnto loue, as ay is dewe,
 Most commonly has ay his obseruance,
⁶ former. And of thaire sleuth tofore⁶ haue repentance.

Thus maist thou seyne, that myn effectis grete,

Vnto the quhich ye aughten maist weye¹,

No lyte offense, to sleuth is [al] forget²:

And therefore in this wisē to thame seye,

As I the here haue bidden³, and conueye

The matere all the better tofore said⁴;

Thus sall on the my chargē bene ilaid.

¹ ought most to
pay regard.
MS. aught and.
² owing to sloth
is all forgotten.

³ MS. bid.

⁴ said before.

Say on than, 'Quhare is becommyn, for schame!

The songis new, the fresch carolis and dance,

The lusty lyf, the mony change of game,

The fresche array, the lusty contenance,

The besy awayte⁵, the hertly obseruance,

That quhilum was amongis thame so ryf?

Bid thame repent in tyme, and mend thare lyf:

⁵ service (waiting
upon).

Or I sall, with my fader old Saturne,

And with al hale⁶ oure hevinly alliance,

Oure glad aspectis from thame with⁷ and turne,

That all the world sall waile⁸ thaire gouernance.

Bid thame be-tyme that thai haue repentance,

And [with] thaire hertis hale renew my lawe;

And I my hand fro beting sall withdrawe.

⁶ all whole.

⁷ remove.

⁸ bewail.

This is to say, contynew in my seruise,

Worschip my law, and my name magnifye,

That am your hevin and your paradise;

And I your confort here sall multiplie,

And, for your meryt here, perpetualye

Ressaue I sall your saulis of my grace,

To lyve with me as goddis in this place."

- With humble thank, and all the reuerence
¹ skill. That feble wit and connyng¹ may atteyne,
 I tuke my leue; and from hir presence,
 Gude-hope and I to-gider, bothë tueyne,
² shortly to say. Departit are, and, shortly for to seyne²,
^{z.e. to be brief.} He hath me led [be] redy wayis ryght
 Vnto Mineruis palace, faire and bryght.
- ³ gate. Quhare as I fand, full redy at the yate³,
 The maister portare, callit Pacience,
 That frely lete vs in, vnquestionate;
 And there we sawe the perfyte excellence,
⁴ The sober The said renewe⁴, the state, the reuerence,
^{retinue(?)} dignified. The strenth, the beautee, and the ordour digne⁵
⁵ dignified. Off hir court riall, noble and benigne.

- And straught vnto the presence sodeynly
 Off dame Minerue, the pacient goddesses,
 Gude-hope my gydë led me redily;
⁶ timorous To quhom anone, with dredefull humylnesse⁶,
^{humility.} Off my cummyng the cause I gan expresse,
 And all the processe hole, vnto the end,
 Off Venus charge, as likit hir to send.

- Off quhich ryght thus hir ansuere was in bref:
 "My sone, I haue wele herd, and vnderstond,
 Be thy reherse, the matere of thy gref,
⁷ seek. And thy request to procure, and to fonde⁷
 Off thy pennance sum confort at my hond,
 Be counsele of thy lady Venus clere,
 To be with hir thyne help in this matere.

Bot in this case thou sall wele knowe and witt,
 Thou may thy hert ground on suich a wise,
 That thy labour will be bot lytill quit¹;
 And thou may set it in anothir wise²,
 That will be to the grete worschip and prise;
 And gif thou durst vnto that way enclyne,
 I will the geve my lore and disciplyne.

¹ required.² MS. in othir wise.

Lo, my gude sone, this is als mich to seyne³,
 As, gif thy lufe [be] sett all-uterly
 Of nycē lust⁴, thy trauail is in veyne;
 And so the end sall turne of thy folye
 To payne and repentance; lo, wate thou quhy⁵!
 Gif the ne list on lufe thy vertew set,
 Vertu sall be the cause of thy forfet⁶.

³ as much as to say.⁴ On foolish desire.⁵ know thou why.⁶ disaster.

Ch. i. Tak Him before in all thy gouernance,
 That in His hand the stere⁷ has of you all;
 And pray vnto His hye purueyance⁸
 Thy lufe to gye, and on Him traist and call,
 That corner-stone and ground is of the wall
 That failis noght; and trust, withoutin drede,
 Vnto thy purpose sone He sall the lede.

⁷ control.⁸ providence.

For lo, the werk that first is foundit sure,
 May better bere a pace⁹ and hyare be,
 Than othir-wise, and langere sall endure,
 Be monyfald, this may thy resoun see,
 And stronger to defend¹⁰ aduersitee:
 Ground thy werk, therefore, vpon the stone,
 And thy desire sall forthward with the gone.

⁹ stage, storey.¹⁰ resist.

Be trewe, and meke, and stedfast in thy thocht,
 And diligent hir merci to procure,
 Noght onely in thy word, for word is noght ;
 Bot gif thy werk and all thy besy cure¹
 Accord thereto ; and vtrid be mesure²
 The place, the houre, the maner, and the wise ;
 Gif mercy sall admitten thy seruise.

¹ care.² given forth by
rule.

All thing has tyme, thus sais Ecclesiaste ;
 And wele is³ him that his tyme wel abit⁴.
 Abyde thy time ; for he that can bot haste
 Can noght of hap⁵, the wisē man it writ ;
 And oft gude fortune flourish with gude wit :
 Quharefore, gif thou will be wele fortunyt,
 Lat wisdomē ay to thy will be iunyt⁶.

³ well is it with.
⁴ abideth. MS.
wil abit.⁵ controls not
fortune.⁶ joined.⁷ brittle, unre-
liable.⁸ sport, delight.

Bot there be mony of so brukill⁷ sort,
 That feynis treuth in lufē for a quhile,
 And setten all thaire wittis and disport⁸
 The sely innocent woman to begyle,
 And so to wynne thaire lustis with a wile ;
 Suich feynit treuth is all bot trechorye,
 Vnder the vmbre⁹ of hid ypocrisye.

⁹ shade.

For as the foulere quhistlith in his throte
 Diuersely, to counterfete the brid,
 And feynis mony a suete and strangē note,
 That in the busk¹⁰ for his desate¹¹ is hid,
 Till sche be fast lokin his net amyde ;
 Ryght so the fatoure¹², the false theif, I say,
 With suete tresoun oft wynnith thus his pray.

¹⁰ bush.
¹¹ deceit.¹² deceiver.

Madame

Fy on all suich ! fy on thaire doubilnesse !
 Fy on thaire lust and bestly appetite !
 Thaire wolfis hertis, in lambis liknesse ;
 Thaire thoughtis blak, hid vnder wordis quhite ;
 Fy on thaire laboure ! fy on thaire delyte !
 That feynen outward all to hir honour,
 And in thaire hert hir worschip wold deuoure.

So hard it is to trusten now on dayes
 The world, it is so double and inconstant,
 Off quhich the suth is kid¹ be mony assayes ;
 More pitee is ; for quhich the remanant,
 That menen wele, and ar noght variant,
 For otheris gilt ar² suspect of vntreuth,
 And hyndrit oft, and treuely that is reuth.

¹ the truth is shown.

² MS. and.

Bot gif the hert be groundit ferme and stable
 In Goddis law, thy purpose to atteyne,
 Thy laboure is to me agreable ;
 And my full help, with counsele trew and pleyne,
 I will the schewe, and this is the certeyne ;
 Opyn thy hert, therefore, and lat me se
 Gif thy remede be pertynent to me."

"Madame," quod I, "sen it is your plesance
 That I declare the kynd of my loving,
 Treuely and gude, withoutin variance,
 In lufe that floure abufe all othir thing ;
 And wold bene he that to hir worschipping
 Myght ought auaile, be Him that starf on rude³,
 And nouthir spare for trauaile, lyf, nor gude⁴.

³ by Him that died on cross
⁴ goods.

- And forthirmore, as touching the nature
 Off my lufing, to worschip or to blame,
 I darre wele say, and there-in me assure,
 For ony gold that ony wight can name
 Nold¹ I be he that suld of hir gude fame
 Be blamischere in ony point or wyse,
 For wele nor wo, quhill my lyfe may suffice².
- ³ MS. theeffect. This is the effect³ trewly of myn entent,
 Touching the suete that smertis me so sore,
⁴ feigned (fault?). Giff this be faynt⁴, I can it noght repent,
 All-though my lyf suld forfaut be therefore,
 Blisful princes! I can seye you no more;
⁵ desire so compasses my wits. Bot so desire my wittis dooth compace⁵,
⁶ without. More ioy in erth kepe I noght bot⁶ your grace."
- ⁷ I will not say it nay. "Desire," quod sche, "I nyl it noght deny⁷,
 So thou it ground and set in Cristin wise;
 And therefore, sone, opyn thy hert playnly."
 truly without deceit. "Madame," quod I, "trew withoutin fantise⁸,
⁹ MS. That day sall I never up-rise. That day sall neuer be I sall vp-rise⁹
¹⁰ covet. For my delyte to couate¹⁰ the plesance
¹¹ honour. That may hir worschip¹¹ putten in balance¹².
¹² jeopardy.
- For oure all thing, lo, this were my gladnesse,
 To sene the freschē beautee of hir face;
¹³ MS. it. And gif I¹³ myght deseruë, be processe¹⁴,
¹⁴ in course of time. For my grete lufe and treuth, to stond in grace,
¹⁵ Her honour safe. Hir worschip sauf¹⁵, lo, herē the blisfull cace¹⁶
¹⁶ lot. That I wold ask, and there-to attend,
 For my most ioye vnto my lyfis end."

"Now wele," quod sche, "and sen that it is so,
 That in vertew thy lufe is set with treuth,
 To helpen the I will be one of tho
 From hensforth, and hertly without sleuth¹,
 Off thy distresse and excesse to haue reuth
 That has thy hert; I will pray full faire
 That Fortune be no more thereto contraire.

¹ heartily without sloth.

For suth it is, that all ye creaturis
 Quhich vnder vs beneth haue your duellyng
 Ressauen diuersely your auenturis²,
 Off quhich the cure and principall melling³
 Apperit is⁴, withoutin repellyng⁵,
 Onely to hir that has the cuttis two
 In hand⁶, bothe of your wele and of your wo.

² Receive your courses of life variously.

³ care and chief guidance (*dit.* meddling).

⁴ Appertains.

⁵ recall.

⁶ *i.e.* Fortune.

And how so be that sum clerkis trete,
 That all your chance⁷ causit is tofore
 Heigh in the hevin, by quhois effectis grete
 Ye movit are to wrething⁸, lesse or more,
 Thar⁹ in the world, thus calling that therefore
 'Fortune,' and so that the diuersitee
 Off thaire wirking¹⁰ suld cause necessitee.

⁷ lot.

⁸ action.

⁹ MS. Quhare.

¹⁰ working.

Bot othir clerkis halden that the man
 Has in him-self the chose¹¹ and libertee
 To cause his awin fortune, how or quhan
 That him best lest, and no necessitee
 Was in the hevin at his natiuitee,
 Bot yit the thingis happin in commune
 Efter purpose¹², so cleping thame 'fortune.'

¹¹ choice.

¹² according to purpose.

¹ previous know- And quhare a persone has tofore knowin¹
ledge.
Off it that is to fall purposely,
Lo, Fortune is bot wayke in suich a thing,
² note. Thou may wele wit², and here ensample quhy;
³ MS. it. To God, that³ is the first cause onely
Off euery thing, there may no fortune fall:
⁴ is previously And quhy? for he foreknawin is⁴ of all.
aware.

And therefore thus I say to this sentence;
⁵ is greatest and Fortune is most and strangest⁵ euermore
strongest.
Quhare lest foreknawing or intelligence
Is in the man; and, sone, of wit or lore
Sen thou are wayke and feble, lo, therefore,
⁶ communion. The more thou art in dangere and commune⁶
With hir that clerkis clepen so Fortune.

Bot for the sake, and at the reuerence
Off Venus clere, as I the said tofore,
I haue of thy distresse compaciencie;
⁷ assuagement. And in confort and relesche⁷ of thy sore,
⁸ advise. The schewit [haue] here myn auise⁸ therefore;
Pray Fortune help, for mich vnlikly thing
Full oft about sche sodeynly dooth bring.

Now go thy way, and haue gude mynde vpone
⁹ in the way of Quhat I haue said in way of thy doctryne⁹.
teaching thee.
¹⁰ MS. he. "I sall, madame," quod I¹⁰; and ryght anone
I tuke my leve. Als straught as ony lyne,
With-in a beme that fro the contree dyvine
¹¹ i.e. in a beam Sche, percyng throw the firmament, extendit¹¹,
which she shot forth as a path
from heaven. To ground ageyne my spirit is descendit.

- Quhare, in a lusty¹ plane, tuke I my way,
 Endlang² a ryuer, plesant to behold,
 Enbroudin³ all with freschë flouris gay,
 Quhare, throu the grauel, bryght as ony gold,
 The cristall water ran so clere and cold,
 That, in myn erë maid contynualy
 A maner soune, mellit⁴ with armony ;
- That full of lytill fischis by the brym,
 Now here, now there, with bakkis blewe as lede,
 Lap and playit, and in a rout can swym
 So prattily, and dressit⁵ thame to sprede
 Thaire curall⁶ fynnis, as the ruby rede,
 That in the sonnë on thaire scalis bryght
 As gesserant⁷ ay glitterit in my sight :
- And by this ilkë ryuer-syde alawe⁸
 Ane hyë-way fand I like to bene⁹,
 On quhich, on euery syde, a long rawe
 Off treis saw I, full of leuis grene,
 That full of fruyte delitable were to sene¹⁰,
 And also, as it come vnto my mind,
 Off bestis sawe I mony diuerse kynd :
- The lyoun king, and his fere¹¹ lyonesse ;
 The pantere, like vnto the smaragdyne¹²;
 The lytill squerell, full of besynesse ;
 The slawë ase, the druggare beste of pyne¹³;
 The nycë¹⁴ ape ; the werely¹⁵ porpapyne ;
 The percyng lynx ; the lufare vnicorne¹⁶,
 That voidis venym with his euour¹⁷ horne.
- ¹ pleasant.
² Along.
³ Embroidered, adorned.
⁴ A kind of sound, mingled.
⁵ addressed.
⁶ coral.
⁷ shining mail.
⁸ down by this same river-side.
⁹ like as it were.
¹⁰ to be seen.
¹¹ companion.
¹² emerald.
¹³ drudging beast of pain.
¹⁴ foolish.
¹⁵ warlike.
¹⁶ the "lover unicorn" was to be taken, Samson-like, by maiden lures.
¹⁷ ivory.

- There sawe I dresse him new out of [his] haunt
 The fery¹ tigere, full of felonye²;
 The dromydare; the standar³ oliphant;
 The wyly fox, the wedowis inemye;
 The clymbare gayte⁴; the elk for alblastrye⁵;
 The herknere bore⁶; the holsum grei for hortis⁷;
 The haire also, that oft gooth to the wortis⁸.
 The bugill⁹, draware by his hornis grete;
 The martrik¹⁰, sable, the foynye¹¹, and mony mo;
 The chalk-quhite ermyn, tippit as the iete;
 The riall hert, the conyng¹², and the ro;
 The wolf, that of the murthir noght sayis¹³ "Ho!"
 The lesty¹⁴ beuer, and the ravin bare¹⁵;
 For chamelot¹⁶, the camel full of hare;

- With mony ane-othir beste diuerse and strange,
 That cummyth noght as now vnto my mynd.
 Bot now to purpose,—straucht furth the range
 I held a-way, oure-hailing in my mynd
 From quhenes I come, and quhare that I suld fynd.
 Fortune, the goddessse, vnto quhom in hye¹⁷
 Gude-hope, my gyde, has led me sodeynly.

- And at the last, behalding thus asyde,
 A round place, wallit, haue I found;
 In myddis quhare eftson¹⁸ I have aspid¹⁹
 Fortune, the goddessse, hufing²⁰ on the ground:
 And ryght before hir fete, of compas round,
 A quhele, on quhich cleuering I sye²¹
 A multitude of folk before myn eye.

¹ active.² cruelty.³ standing.⁴ climbing goat.⁵ elk strong

against missiles.

⁶ heark'ning

boar.

⁷ badger good for

hurts.

⁸ plants.⁹ ox.¹⁰ marten.¹¹ beech-marten.¹² skilful.¹³ MS. say.¹⁴ skilful.¹⁵ ravening bear.¹⁶ camlet cloth.¹⁷ in haste.¹⁸ soon after.¹⁹ MS. spide.²⁰ lodging. *Mod.**Scot.* houl, a

resort.

²¹ clinging I saw.

And ane surcote sche werit¹ long that tyde,
 That semyt to me of diuerse hewis,
 Quhilum thus, quhen sche wald [hir] turne asyde,
 Stude this goddesse of fortune and [of glewis²];
 A chapellet, with mony fresche anewis³
 Sche had vpon her hed; and with this hong
 A mantill on hir schuldris, large and long,

¹ wore.² sports, freaks.³ little rings.
Fr. anneau.

That furrit was with ermyn full quhite,
 Degoutit with the self⁴ in spottis blake:
 And quhilum in hir chiere⁵ thus a lyte⁶
 Loring sche was; and thus sone it wold slake⁷,
 And sodeynly a maner⁸ smylyng make,
 An⁹ sche were glad; [for] at one contenance
 Sche held noght, bot [was] ay in variance.

⁴ self-spotted.⁵ cheer,
demeanour.⁶ a little.⁷ slacken, cease.⁸ manner of.⁹ If. MS. And.

And vnderneath the quhelë sawe I there
 Ane vgly pit, depe as ony helle,
 That to behald thereon I quoke for fere;
 Bot o thing herd I, that quho there-in fell
 Come no more vp agane, tidingis to telle;
 Off quhich, astonait of that ferefull syght,
 I ne wist quhat to done, so was I fricht¹⁰.

¹⁰ affrighted.

Bot for to se the sudayn weltering
 Off that ilk quhele, that sloppare¹¹ was to hold,
 It semyt vnto my wit a strangë¹² thing,
 So mony I sawe that than clymben wold,
 And failit foting, and to ground were rold;
 And othir eke, that sat aboue on hye,
 Were ouerthrawe in twinklyng of ane eye.

¹¹ slippery.¹² MS. strong.

And on the quhele was lytill void space,
 Wele nere oure-straught¹ fro lawē vnto² hye;
 And they were ware³ that long sat in place,
 So tolter quhilum did sche it to-wrye⁴;
 There was bot clymbe and ryght downward hye⁵,
 And sum were eke that fallyng had [so] sore,
 There for to clymbe thaire corage was no more.

I sawe also that, quhere sum were slungin,
 Be quhirlyng of the quhele, vnto the ground,
⁶ thrust them up. Full sudaynly sche hath [thaim] vp ythrun⁶,
 And set thame on agane full sauf and sound:
 And euer I sawe a new swarme abound,
 That [thought] to clymbe vpward vpon the quhele,
⁷ go round. In stede of thame that myght no langer rele⁷.

⁸ MS. presene. And at the last, in presence⁸ of thame all
⁹ called. That stude about, sche clepit⁹ me be ñame;
 And therewith apou kneis gan I fall
¹⁰ saluting. Full sodaynly hail¹⁰ing, abaist for schame;
 And, smyl¹⁰ing thus, sche said to me in game,
 “Quhat dois thou here? Quho has the hider sent?
 Say on anone, and tell me thyne entent.

I se wele, by thy chere and contenance,
 There is sum thing that lyis the on hert,
¹¹ stands. It stant¹¹ noght with the as thou wald, perchance?”
 “Madame,” quod I, “for lufe is all the smert
¹² along and across. *Mod. colloq.* to tell the long and the short of it. That euer I fele, endlang and ouerthwert¹².
 Help, of your grace, me wofull wrechit wight,
¹³ Since. Sen¹³ me to cure ye powere haue and myght.”

“Quhat help,” quod sche, “wold thou that I ordeyne,

To bring the vnto thy hertis desire?”

“Madame,” quod I, “bot that your grace dedeyne¹, ¹ deign.

Off your grete myght, my wittis to enspire,

To win the well that slokin may the fyre

In quhich I birn. A, goddesse fortunate!

Help now my game, that is in point to mate².”

² on point of being checkmated.

“Off mate?” quod sche, “O! verray sely wrech³,

³ truly helpless wretch.

I se wele by thy dedely coloure pale,

Thou art to feble of thy-self to streche

Vpon my quhele, to clymbe or to hale⁴

⁴ haul.

Withoutin help; for thou has fundin stale⁵

⁵ found stall (prison).

This mony day, withoutin werdis wele⁶,

⁶ happy fate.

And wantis now thy veray hertis hele⁷.

⁷ health.

Wele maistow be a wrechit man callit,

That wantis the confort suld⁸ thy hert glade;

⁸ MS. that suld.

And has all thing within thy hert stallit⁹,

⁹ installed.

That may thy youth oppresen or defade¹⁰.

¹⁰ dispirit.

Though thy begynnyng hath bene retrograde,

Be froward opposyt quhare till aspert¹¹,

¹¹ Opposed by froward men towards whom thou art exasperated.

Now sall thai turne, and luke on the dert¹².”

¹² dirt.

And therewith-all vnto the quhele in hye¹³

¹³ in haste.

Sche hath me led, and bad me lere¹⁴ to clymbe,

¹⁴ learn.

Vpon the quhich I steppit sudaynly.

“Now hald thy grippis,” quod sche, “for thy tyme,

Ane houre and more it ryannis ouer prime;

To count the hole, the half is nere away;

Spend wele, therefore, the remanant of the day.

- ¹ these folk
before (thee). Ensample," quod sche, "tak of this tofore¹,
That fro my quhele be rollit as a ball;
For the nature of it is euermore,
- ² descend. After ane hicht, to vale² and geue a fall,
- ³ to cause to fall. Thus, quhen me likith, vp or doune to fall³.
Fare-wele," quod sche, and by the ere me toke
So earnestly, that therewithall I woke.
- ⁴ restless spirit. O besy goste⁴! ay flikering to and fro,
That neuer art in quiet nor in rest,
Till thou cum to that place that thou cam fro,
Quhich is thy first and verray proper nest:
- ⁵ art thou treated. From day to day so sore here artow drest⁵,
- ⁶ always while
waking. That with thy flesche ay walking⁶ art in trouble,
- ⁷ pain. And sleping eke; of pyne⁷ so has thou double.
- ⁸ MS. Couert. Towart⁸ my-self all this mene I to loke⁹.
⁹ have regard. Though that my spirit vexit was tofore
- ¹⁰ dreaming.
MS. sueuyng. In sueuenyng¹⁰, alssone as euer I woke
- ¹¹ MS. xxy fold. By twenty-fold¹¹ it was in trouble more,
Bethinking me with sighing hert and sore
That [I] nane othir thingis bot dremes had,
¹² certainty. Nor sekernes¹², my spirit with to glad.
- ¹³ addressed. And therewith sone I dressit¹³ me to ryse,
- ¹⁴ Filled full. Fulfil¹⁴ of thoght, pyne, and aduersitee;
- ¹⁵ MS. in. And to my-self I said vpon¹⁵ this wise;
"A! merci, Lord! quhat will ye do with me?
Quhat lyf is this? quhare hath my spirit be?
Is this of my forethoght impressioun,
Or is it from the hevin a visioun?"

And gif ye goddis, of youre puruiance¹,
 Haue schewit this for my reconforting,
 In relesche² of my furiose pennance,
 I yow beseke full humily of this thing,
 That of youre grace I myght haue more takenyng³,³ token.
 Gif it sal be as in my slepe before
 Ye shewit haue." And forth, withoutin more,

In hye vnto the wyndow gan I walk,
 Moving within my spirit of this sight,
 Quhare sodeynly a turture⁴, quhite as chalk⁵,
 So evinly vpon my hand gan lyght,
 And vnto me sche turnyt hir full ryght;
 Off quham the chere in hir birdis apourt⁶
 Gave me in hert kalendis of confort⁷.

This fair bird ryght in hir bill gane hold
 Of red iorofflis⁸ with thair stalkis grene
 A fair branche, quhare writtin was with gold,
 On euery list⁹, with branchis bryght and schene¹⁰⁹ edge.
 In compas fair, full plesandly to sene¹¹,
 A plane sentence, quhich, as I can deuise
 And haue in mynd, said ryght on this wise:

"Awak! awake! I bring, lufar¹², I bring
 The newis glad, that blisfull bene and sure
 Of thy confort; now lauch, and play, and syng,
 That art besid¹³ so glad ane auenture;
 For in the hevyn decretit is the cure¹⁴."
 And vnto me the flouris fair present¹⁵:
 With wyngis spred, hir wayis furth sche went.

¹ providence.² assuagement.³ token.⁴ turtle-dove.⁵ MS. calk.⁶ demeanour.⁷ beginnings of comfort.⁸ gillyflowers.⁹ edge.¹⁰ flourishes
bright and
beautiful.¹¹ pleasant to see.¹² lover.¹³ near to.¹⁴ cure is decreed
thee.¹⁵ she presented.

¹ ere. Quhilk vp a-none I tuke, and as I gesse,
 Ane hundreth tymes, or¹ I forthir went,
 I haue it red, with hertfull glaidnese;
² took. And, half with hope, and half with dred, it hent²,
 And at my beddis hed, with gud entent,
 I haue it fair pynnit vp, and this
 First takyn was of all my help and blisse.

The quhich treuly efter, day be day,
 That all my wittis maistris had tofore,
³ MS. Quhich From hennesferth³ the paynis did away.
 And schortly, so wele Fortune has hir bore,
 To quikin treuly day by day my lore,
⁴ That to my To my larges that⁴ I am cumin agayne,
 freedom. To blisse with hir that is my sourane.

⁵ upon so small **B**ot for als moche as sum nicht think or seyne,
 a foundation. Quhat nedis me, apoun so litill evyn⁵,
 Mod. Scot. a To writt all this? I ansuere thus ageyne,—
 supposition. Quho that from hell war croppin onys in hevin⁶,
⁶ had once crept Wald efter o thank for ioy mak sex or sevyn⁷:
 into heaven. And euery wicht his awin suete⁸ or sore
⁷ MS. vi or vii. Has maist in mynde: I can say you no more.
⁸ sweet,

 happiness.
 Eke quho may in this lyfe haue more plesance
⁹ liberty. Than cum to largesse⁹ from thraldom and peyne,
¹⁰ means. And by the mene¹⁰ of Luffis ordinance,
 That has so many in his goldin cheyne?
¹¹ MS. this. Quhich thinkis¹¹ to wyn his hertis souereyne,
¹² blame. Quho suld me wite¹² to write thar-of, lat se!
 Now sufficiante is my felicittee.



Beseching vnto fair Venus abufe,

For all my brethir that bene in this place,

This is to seyne, that seruandis ar to Lufe,

And of his lady can no thank purchase,

His paine relesch¹, and sone to stand in grace, ¹ relieve.

Boith to his worschip² and to his first ese; ² honour.

So that it hir and resoune noght displese:

And eke for thame that ar noght entrit inne

The dance of lufe, bot thidder-wart on way,

In gudē tyme and sely³ to begynne ³ seasonable.

Thair prentissehed, and forthir-more I pray

For thame that passit ben the mony affray ⁴ MS. cunnyng.

In lufe, and cummyn⁴ ar to full plesance,

To graunt thame all, lo! gude perseuerance:

And eke I pray for all the hertis dull,

That lyven here in sleuth and ignorance,

And has no curage at the rose to pull,

Thair lif to mend and thair saulis auance

With thair suete lore, and bring thame to gude
chance;

And quho that will noght for this prayer turne,

Quhen thai wald faynest speid, that thai may spurne⁵. ⁵ i.e. I pray that they may trip.

To rekyn of euery-thing the circumstance,

As hapnit me quhen lessen gan my sore,

Of my rancoure and [of my] wofull chance,

It war to long, I lat it be tharefor.

And thus this floure⁶, I can seye no more,

⁶ i.e. flower of womanhood.

So hertly has vnto my help attendit,

That from the deth hir man sche has defendit.

¹ working.

And eke the goddis mercifull virking¹,
 For my long pane and trewe seruice in lufe,
 That has me gevin halely myn asking,
 Quhich has my hert for euir sett abuse
 In perfyte ioy, that neuir may remufe,
² praise. Bot onely deth: of quhom, in laud and prise²,
 With thankfull hert I say richt in this wise:—

³ may.

“Blissit mot³ be the goddis all,
 So fair that glitteren in the firmament!
 And blissit be thare myght celestiall,
 That haue convoyit hale, with one assent,
 My lufe, and to [so] glade a consequent!
⁴ axle-tree. And thankit be Fortunys exiltree⁴
 And quhele, that thus so wele has quhirlit me.

Thankit mot be, and fair and lufe befall
 The nyctingale, that, with so gud entent,
 Sang thare of lufe the notis suete and small,
 Quhair my fair hertis lady was present,
⁵ ere. Hir with to glad, or⁵ that sche forthir went!
⁶ gillyflower. And thou gerafloure⁶, mot i-thankit be
 All othir flouris for the lufe of the!

And thankit be the fair castell wall,
 Quhare as I quhilom lukit furth and lent.

⁷ saints of March.

Thankit mot be the sanctis marciall⁷,
 That me first causit hath this accident.
 Thankit mot be the grenë bewis bent,

⁸ happened to me.

Throu quhom, and vnder, first fortunyt me⁸

⁹ healing.

My hertis hele⁹, and my confort to be.

For to the presence suete and delitable,
 Rycht of this floure that full is of plesance,
 By processe and by menys fauorable,
 First of the blisful goddis purueyance¹,
 And syne² throu long and trew contynuaunce
 Of veray³ faith in lufe and trew seruice,
 I cum am, and [yit] forthir in this wise.

¹ providence.² afterwards.³ true.

Vnworthy, lo, bot onely of hir grace,
 In lufis yok, that esy is and sure,
 In guerdoune of all my lufis space⁴
 Sche hath me tak, hir humble creature.
 And thus befell my blisfull auenture,
 In youth, of lufe, that now from day to day
 Flourith ay newe, and yit forthir, I say.

⁴ duration.

Go litill tretise, nakit of eloquence,
 Causing simplese and pouertee to wit⁵;
 And pray the reder to haue pacience
 Of thy defaute, and to supporten it⁶,
 Of his gudnese thy brukilnese to knytt⁷,
 And his tong for to reule and to stere,
 That thy defaultis helit may bene here.

⁵ simplicity and poverty to be known.⁶ to bear with it.⁷ thy brokenness to piece together.

Allace! and gif thou cummyst in the presence,
 Quhare as⁸ of blame faynest thou wald be quite,
 To here thy rude and crukit eloquens,
 Quho sal be thare to pray for thy remyt⁹?
 No wicht, bot geve¹⁰ hir merci will admytt
 The for Gud-will, that is thy gyd and stere:
 To quhame for me thou pitously requere¹¹.

⁸ Where that.⁹ excuse.¹⁰ No person, unless.¹¹ do thou piteously entreat.

- ¹ MS. fotall. And thus endith the fatall¹ influence
 Causit from hevyn, quhare power is commytt
 Of gournance, by the magnificence
 Of Him that hiest in the hevin sitt ;
² give thanks. To Quham we thank² that all oure [lif] hath writt,
 MS. think.
³ Who could read Quho coutht it red, agone syne mony a yere³,
 it many a year
 ago. Hich in the hevynnis figure circulere.
- ⁴ hymns. Vnto [the] impnis⁴ of my maisteris dere,
 MS. impnis. Gowere and Chaucere, that on the steppis satt
 Of rethorike quhill thai were lyvand here,
 Superlatiue as poetis laureate,
 In moralitee and eloquence ornate,
 I recommend my buk in lynis sevin,
 And eke thair saulis vn-to the blisse of hevin. Amen. 19

**Quod explicit Jacobus Primus, Scotorum Rex
 Illustrissimus.**

GOOD COUNSEL.

[From "The Gude and Godlie Ballates," 1578.]

SEN throw vertew incessis dignitie,
And vertew is flour and rute of noblesse ay,
Of ony wit, or quhat estait thow be,
His steppis follow, and dreid for none effray¹:
Eject vice, and follow treuth alway:
Lufe maist thy God that first thy lufe began,
And for ilk² inche he will the quyte³ ane span.

Be not ouir⁴ proude in thy prosperitie,
For as it cummis, sa will it pas away;
The tyme to compt⁵ is schort, thow may weill se,
For of grene gress sone cummis wallowit⁶ hay.
Labour in treuth, quhilk suith is of thy fay⁷;
Traist maist in God, for he best gyde the can,
And for ilk inche he will the quyte ane span.

Sen word is thrall, and thocht is only fre,
Thou dant⁸ thy tounge, that power hes and may⁹,
Thou steik¹⁰ thy ene fra warldis vanitie:
Refraine thy lust, and harkin quhat I say:
Graig or¹¹ thow slyde, and keip furth¹² the hie-way,
Thow hald the fast upon thy God and man,
And for ilk inche he will the quyte ane span.

¹ fear no affright-
ing.

² each.
³ requite.

⁴ over.

⁵ count, reckon.

⁶ withered.

⁷ which is the
truth (substance)
of thy faith.

⁸ Tame thou.
⁹ is mighty.

¹⁰ Close thou.

¹¹ Grope ere.
¹² forward.

Quod King James the First.

ROBERT HENRYSON.

ROBERT HENRYSON.

LINKING the latter days of the First James to the brilliant age of James the Fourth shines the name of Robert Henryson, writer of the earliest Scottish pastoral. First of the greater Scottish makars whose life and work bore no direct relation to the political history of the country, the Dunfermline poet struck on the national lyre certain sweet and quaint new keys which ring yet with an undiminished charm, and preserve for him a unique place among the master-singers of the north.

Little is known of the personal history of this "most exquisite of the Scottish Chaucerians." According to the tradition of last century he was the representative of the family of Henryson or Henderson of Fordell in Fife; and in Douglas's *Baronage of Scotland* he is stated to have been the father of James Henderson, King's Advocate and Lord Justice-Clerk in the reign of James IV., who redeemed the family lands and had them erected into a barony in 1510. Of these facts, however, though possible and even probable enough, there exists no absolute proof. In the Chartulary of Dunfermline there are three deeds dated March, 1477-8, and July, 1478, by Henry, Abbot of Dunfermline, granting to George de Lothreisk and Patrick

Baron the lands of Spitalfield near Inverkeithing. To each of these documents the name of *Magister Robertus Henryson, notarius publicus*, is appended as witness. From the title of notary public Dr. Irving, in his *History of Scottish Poetry*, infers that Henryson was probably an ecclesiastic, and could therefore have no legitimate offspring. It has to be noted, however, that Henryson is nowhere styled *clericus* or *presbyter*, the usual titles of churchmen. By an Act of James III., moreover, in 1469, laymen had been admitted to act as notaries in matters civil. It is quite possible, therefore, that the poet may have been the father of the Lord Justice-Clerk who fell with James IV. at Flodden. Whether this was the case, however, and whether the lands of Fordell had formerly belonged to the family of Henryson, and had been wadsett or alienated by them previous to the acquisition by the Justice-Clerk,* are questions hardly likely to find conclusive settlement now.

In one of his works Henryson describes himself as "ane man of age," and Sir Francis Kynaston, who translated the *Testament of Cresseid* into Latin verse in the time of Charles I., stated upon what seems good authority that the poet "being very old, died of a diarrhœa or flux." It is certain that he had passed away before 1506, for Dunbar, in his well-known "Lament for the Makaris," written about that year, says of Death—

In Dunfermelyne he hes done roun
With gud Maister Robert Henrisoun.

* See Appendix to Laing's edition of Henryson, pp. 44-5.

Laing therefore conjectures that we cannot greatly err in supposing the poet to have been born not later than the year 1425. From the general tone, no less than the various classical allusions in his work, it might be gathered that he had received an education unusually liberal for laymen of that age. This is made certain by the fact that he is uniformly styled Master Robert Henryson, a title confined exclusively in those days to persons who had taken an academic degree. His name, nevertheless, does not appear on the registers of St. Andrews, at that time the only university in Scotland, and it must therefore be inferred that he pursued or completed his studies at some foreign university, such as Louvain or Paris. This was a custom from an early date in Scotland. In 1365 and 1368, as we know from existing permits, John Barbour, Archdeacon of Aberdeen, and others passed through England to France for purposes of scholarship; and fifty years after Henryson's time there was hardly a university in Europe which did not count among its members wandering Scottish scholars like George Buchanan and the Admirable Crichton. Glasgow University, the second in Scotland, was founded by a bull of Pope Nicholas V. in 1451, and among those incorporated as members appears on 10th September, 1462, "the venerable Master Robert Henryson, Licentiate in Arts and Bachelor in Decrees." Such a title would imply that the poet had qualified for the legal profession, and upon the strength of this Laing suggests that "although no such record is preserved, it is by no

means improbable that he became a Fellow of Glasgow University for the purpose of reading lectures in law." But it seems as likely that his enrolment, with that of others, was for the purpose of giving weight and dignity to the new foundation.

Whatever may have been his functions as a notary public, Henryson, according to common tradition, followed the occupation of schoolmaster in Dunfermline. He is so designated first on the title of his *Fables* in 1570 and 1571, and again on the edition of his "*Cresseid*" in 1593. Various conjectures have been hazarded as to the exact professional position of the poet.* It is now, however, well known† that a "*Sang Scule*" existed at an early period in almost every one of the cathedral cities of Scotland, as well as in many of the smaller towns. The "*Sang Scule*" of Aberdeen, the most famous of these ancient institutions, is believed to have existed as early as 1370, and so popular did it become that it attracted teachers of even continental fame. The original purpose of these "*scules*" was the instruction of youths in the music and Latin necessary for proper performance of the church services. Gradually, however, other branches of instruction were added, until the institutions assumed the complete functions of grammar schools. Laing quotes from the Privy Council Register of 13th

* Lord Hailes' *Ancient Scottish Poems*, p. 273; Sibbald's *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry*, vol. i., p. 87; and Chalmers' Preface to "*Robene and Makyne*," &c., p. vii., note 2.

† See an interesting article on "*Music in Early Scotland*" by Mr. J. Cuthbert Hadden in the *Scottish Review* for October, 1888.

October, 1573, a complaint at the instance of "John Henryson of the Grammar School within the Abbey of Dunfermline," which states that "he and his predecessors had continued Masters and Teachers of the Youth, in letters and doctrine, to their great commodity, within the said school, past memory of man, admitted thereto by the Abbots of Dunfermling for the time," &c. This, without doubt, was the school of which the poet was in his time chief master, and curiously enough it is the only "sang scule" in Scotland of which traces still remain. According to Mr. Cuthbert Hadden, "the precentor of the parish church of Dunfermline still enjoys a yearly salary of £8 6s. 8d. as teacher of music in the Sang or Grammar School, which is a sinecure."

No further facts of Henryson's life are known, though it may be possible to conjecture something of the poet's character and experience from the character and tone of his work. Twelve years of age when the poet-king, James I., was slain at Perth, the greater part of his life was comprised in the reigns of James II. and James III., the darkest and most stormy period of Stuart rule in Scotland, and though it cannot be supposed that he had any personal share in the troubles of the time, their shadow can be distinctly seen resting here and there upon his verse. A quiet, thoughtful man he appears to have been, who, as the echoes of the changeful strife without reached him in his still abbey walk, came to ask himself what were the true ideals and the meaning of human existence. The answer at

which he arrived is to be read everywhere between the lines of his poems.

Henryson's works have been preserved scattered amid the following collections:—The Asloan MS. in the Auchinleck Library, the Bannatyne MS. and Gray's MS. in the Advocates' Library, the Maitland MS. in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, the Harleian MS. in the British Museum, and Makculloch's MS. which was in the possession of his editor, Laing. Of editions of the separate poems there may be mentioned "Orpheus and Eurydice," printed by Chepman & Millar in 1508, the "Moral Fables" by Lekprevik in 1570, and the "Testament of Cresseid" by Henry Charteris in 1593. From the Bannatyne MS., in which are included the greater number of Henryson's existing poems, the Bannatyne Club printed "Robene and Makyne" and "The Testament of Cresseid" in 1824; and in 1832 the Maitland Club reprinted the "Moral Fables" from an edition of 1621. The poet's works, however, did not exist in complete collected form until 1865, in which year an edition, "leaving nothing to be desired," was edited by David Laing and published at Edinburgh.

—“The Testament of Cresseid” has generally been esteemed the greatest of Henryson's compositions, though it cannot be considered the most complete. It suffers from the fact that it forms the sequel to a poem by another writer. Upon reading Chaucer, whose works had but lately been printed, the Scottish poet appears to have been struck by the unjust ending of the tale of "Troilus and Creseide." In

that tale, while the noble Troilus perishes on the battlefield, the false Creseide is left living with Diomed. To remedy this defect, and bring about a catastrophe more in accordance with poetic justice, Henryson wrote his episode. This formed part of the contents of the lost folios of the Asloan MS. (1515), and Laing conjectures that it was probably printed by Chepman & Millar with other works of Henryson in 1508; but so close a relation did it bear to Chaucer's poem, and so much did it enhance the interest of the narrative, that it was included, without its author's name, in all the early editions of the English poet after 1532. "It was even," says Laing, "enumerated in the list of Chaucer's works by Leland, Bale, and other early writers, who seem never to have heard of the name of Henryson." The true authorship of the "Testament" was first acknowledged in 1635 by Sir Francis Kynaston in the introduction to his Latin translation of "Troilus and Creseid." "For the author of this supplement," he says, "called the Testament of Creseid, which may pass for the sixth and last book of this story, I have very sufficiently been informed by Sir Thomas Erskine, late Earle of Kelly, and divers aged scholars of the Scottish nation, that it was made and written by one Mr. Robert Henderson, sometime chiefe Schoolemaster in Dunfermling, much about the time that Chaucer was first printed; and dedicated to King Henry VIII. by Mr. Thinne, which was neere the end of his raigne" (*i.e.*, in 1532).

The historian of Scottish poetry has remarked that

“for ‘the tale of Troy divine’ neither Chaucer nor Henryson had recourse to the classical sources. This, like some other subjects of ancient history, had been invested with all the characteristics of modern romance. The personages are ancient, but the institutions and manners are all modern.” At another place, adverting to the poet’s account of Mercury, the same writer expresses the hope “that Henryson taught one system of mythology to his scholars, and adopted another for the embellishment of his poetry.” Such freedom of treatment, however, was common to all the writers as well as the painters of the time, and it detracts little from the actual value and beauty of the poem. The chief objection to the “Testament of Cresseid” has been that in afflicting the heroine with so loathsome a disease as leprosy Henryson departed from the delicacy of Chaucer’s original work. Godwin, the biographer of Chaucer, observes: “Henryson perceived what there was defective in the close of the story of Troilus and Creseide as Chaucer left it; but the Scottish poet was incapable of rising to the refinement, or conceiving the delicacies of the English poet; though it must be admitted that in the single instance of the state of mind, the half-recognition, half-ignorance, attributed to Troilus in his last encounter with Creseide, there is a felicity of conception impossible to be surpassed. In some respects the younger poet has clearly the advantage over the more ancient. There is in his piece abundance of incident, of imagery, and of painting, without tediousness, with scarcely one of those lagging, impertinent, and un-

meaning lines, with which the production of Chaucer is so frequently degraded." With the latter part of this criticism Dr. Merry Ross* entirely agrees, saying of the lament of Cresseid in the spittal-house in particular, "The pathos throughout is so sweet and tender, the imagery so rich and various, the word-painting so felicitous, in spite of an excessive alliteration, that we venture to pronounce this part of the poem the highest achievement of Henryson's genius." Attention may be drawn to the opening of the poem as a passage of singular charm. Nothing could be happier than the introduction, wherein the poet, after regarding from his chamber the beauty of the frosty night outside, mends the fire, comforts his spirits with "ane drink," and, taking a book in hand, settles himself "to cut the winter nicht and mak it schort." And altogether, there can be no question that in the "Testament of Cresseid" the Scottish makar has, to quote his editor, "produced as a distinct episode a picture of touching pathos and beauty."

"Orpheus and Eurydice," a metrical version of the well known classical story, of equal length with the "Testament of Cresseid," has been attributed alternately to the early years and to the old age of the poet. Holding close to the incidents of the tale as narrated by Virgil and Ovid, it certainly exhibits little of the master-touch seen in its sister composition, and may be considered as chiefly of note for illustrating its author's familiarity with the classic learning of his time.

* *Scottish History and Literature*, p. 165.

Most bulky and perhaps best known of Henryson's works is his series of "Moral Fables." These claim to be Scottish metrical versions of thirteen of the fables of Æsop, each with a moral appended, and the whole introduced by two prologues. Of the Latin collection of fables attributed to the Phrygian Æsop, it is conjectured that the first printed edition was made at Rome, in the year 1473, and that proving extremely popular, the work was translated before long into most European languages. At anyrate, collections of such apologues, under the names of Æsop, Avianus, and other ancient writers, afforded popular amusement for all classes of people towards the end of the fifteenth century. Which of these collections Henryson used as a model is not known, but it is believed, from their allusions to the corruptions and disturbances of the time, that his own "Moral Fables" were written between the years 1470 and 1480, and he has the credit of being one of the first of the British poets to employ the apologue as a distinct class of literature. In telling these stories Henryson departs from the terse manner of his classic models, and his work bears little likeness to the short, neat fables of Gay and La Fontaine. His tales are full of descriptive imagery, pleasant dialogue, humorous incident, and allusions to the everyday life and manners of his time. He had the artistic instinct to perceive that such productions take their chief value from the human sentiment behind them. So much, indeed, has he raised the interest of the narratives by the reflection in them of human feeling and character

that he may be said to have by them added to literature a novel and fascinating poetic form. From the fable which has generally been considered his best, "The Taill of the Uplandis Mous and the Burges Mous," a good deal is to be gathered, as one critic has pointed out, of the social institutions of Henryson's age. Among other details the town mouse, a "gild-brother" and "free burges," when she travels to visit her upland sister, who lives "as outlawis dois," goes barefoot and with pikestaff in her hand, "as pure pilgrym." Some light is even cast upon the diet of those days--wine, cheese, thraf-cakes, and "all the coursis that cuikis culd defyne." But if manners have altered, human nature has not changed. The modern reader is tempted to smile in curious recognition of the city madame who, when offered the plain fare of her sister's shieling, "promptit furth in pryde." In short, under the guise of apologue this and the other twelve fables present us with pictures of real life whose shrewd accuracy is all the more delightful that it is veiled behind a playful name.

Henryson's shorter pieces are marked no less strongly than his more ambitious works with the individuality of their author. Among them "The Bludy Serk" has been called one of the earliest specimens of ballad writing. But it is in reality a subtle allegory which might have afforded Bunyan a suggestion for his episode of Giant Despair. A better example of the poet's allegorical fancy is found in "The Garmond of Gude Ladeis," a typical work of its kind, containing a touch or two, as in the third verse,

which our modern tongue could hardly approach. The other short poems, like "The Abbay Walk" and "The Prais of Aige," with their gentle temper and pensive benignity, bring the reader nearest, perhaps, to the character of the poet himself.

It is by his single short pastoral, however, that Henryson, after all has been said, is likely to linger longest in the memory of the reader. "Robene and Makyne" is the earliest specimen of pastoral poetry in the language, but in no respect does it fall short of later efforts in the same field. Dr. Irving, indeed, considered it "superior in many respects to the similar attempts of Spenser and Browne," finding it "free from the glaring improprieties which sometimes appear in the pastorals of those distinguished writers," while Dr. Merry Ross declared it to be "one of the loveliest pastorals in all literature." Every point in the poem is true to nature, and every stanza strikes a chord in the common heart of humanity. Nothing could be more profoundly pathetic than the lines beginning "Robene that warld is all away," simple as the words appear ; and when the poem has been read throughout, the whole remains in the mind, clear and vivid, a picture to which no touch could add effect.

In this poem, within a brief compass, is perhaps to be discovered the main secret of Henryson's charm. Here the art and the heart of the master-singer are revealed together—the lines are still lightened by a quaint and kindly humour while his pen is touching the tender fountains of passion and regret.

ROBENE AND MAKYNE.



ROBENE sat on gud grene hill,
 Kepand a flok of fe¹;
 Mirry Makyne said him till²,
 "Robene, thow rew on me³;
 I haif thé luvit lowd and still⁴
 Thir yeiris two or thre;
 My dule in dern bot gif thow dill⁵,
 Doutless but dreid I de⁶."

Robene answerit, "Be the Rude,
 Na-thing of lufe I know,
 Bot keipis my scheip undir yone wude,
 Lo, quhair thay raik on raw⁷!
 Quhat hes marrit thé in thy mude,
 Makyne, to me thow schaw?
 Or quhat is lufe or to be lude⁸?
 Fane wald I leir⁹ that law.

"At luvís lair¹⁰ gife thow will leir,
 Tak thair ane A, B, C;
 Be heynd¹¹, courtass, and fair of feir¹²,
 Wyse, hardy, and fre:

¹ sheep.

² to.

³ have pity on me.

⁴ openly and
secretly.

⁵ My secret woe
unless thou
share.

⁶ for lack of en-
durance I die

⁷ range in row.

⁸ loved.

⁹ learn.

¹⁰ lore.

¹¹ gentle.

¹² carriage.

¹ daunt thee.

² Whatsoever
woe in secret
thou endure.

³ Exert.

So that no denger do thé deir¹,
Quhat dule in dern thow dre²;
Preiss³ thee with pane at all poweir
Be pacient, and previe."

⁴ wot.

⁵ thus uneasy.

⁶ glad.

⁷ healtly on the
heights.

⁸ If.

⁹ bring reproof.

Robene answerit hir agane,
"I wait⁴ nocht quhat is lufe;
But I haif mervell incertaine,
Quhat makis thé this wanrufe⁵.
The weddir is fair, and I am fane⁶,
My scheip gois haill aboif⁷,
And⁸ we wald play us in this plane
Thay wald us bayth reproof⁹."

¹⁰ take heed.

¹¹ advise.

¹² whole.

¹³ And also.

¹⁴ salve for
sorrow.

¹⁵ In secret with
thee unless I
deal.

¹⁶ this same time.

¹⁷ While we have
lain.

¹⁸ ill-will have I
if I tarry.

¹⁹ stir.

"Robene, tak tent¹⁰ unto my taill,
And wirk all as I reid¹¹,
And thow sall haif my hairt all haill¹²,
Eik and¹³ my maidenheid.
Sen God sendis bute for baill¹⁴,
And for murnyng remeid;
In dern with thee bot giff I daill¹⁵
Dowtles I am bot deid."

"Makyne, to-morne this ilka tyde¹⁶
And ye will meet me heir
Peraventure my scheip may gang besyd
Quhill we haif liggit¹⁷ full neir;
Bot mawgre haif I and I byd¹⁸
Fra thay begin to steir¹⁹.
Quhat lysis on hairt I will nocht hyd;
Makyne than mak gud cheir."

- "Robene, thow reivis me roiff¹ and rest!
I luvē bot thé allane."
- "Makyne, adew! the sone gois west,
The day is neir-hand gane."
- "Robene, in dule I am so drest²,
That lufe wil be my bane."
- "Ga lufe, Makyne, quhair-evir thow list,
For lemman I luvē nane."
- "Robene, I stand in sic a style³
I sicht⁴, and that full sair."
- "Makyne, I haif bene heir this quhyle,
At hame God gif I wair⁵."
- "My huny, Robene, talk ane quhyle,
Gif thow will do na mair."
- "Makyne, sum uthir man begyle,
For hamewart I will fair."
- Robene on his wayis went
Als licht as leif of tre.
- Mawkyn murnit in hir intent⁶,
And trowd him nevir to se.
- Robene brayd atour the bent⁷;
Than Makyne cryit on hie,
- "Now ma thow sing, for I am schent⁸;
Quhat alis lufe at me?"
- Mawkyne went hame withowttin fail
Full very eftir cowth weip⁹.
- Than Robene in a ful fair daill¹⁰
Assemblit all his scheip.

¹ robbest me of quiet.² beset.³ such a state.⁴ sigh.⁵ God grant I were.⁶ desire.⁷ "strode across the brake."⁸ lost.⁹ weary and like to weep.¹⁰ deal, number.

Be that sum parte of Mawkynis aill
 Out-throw his hairt coud creip;
 He fallowit hir fast thair till assaill
 And till hir tuke gude keep¹.

¹ to her took
 good heed.

“Abyd, abyd, thow fair Makyne!
 A word for ony-thing!
 For all my luve it sal be thyne,
 Withowttin departing².
 All haill thy harte for till haif myne³
 Is all my cuvating.
 My scheip to-morn, quhill⁴ houris nyne,
 Will neid of no keping.”

² Without
 dividing.

³ To have thy
 whole heart
 mine.

⁴ till.

“Robene, thow hes hard sounge and say
 In gestis⁵ and storeis auld
 ‘The man that will nocht quhen he may,
 Sall haif nocht quhen he wald.’
 I pray to Jesu, every day
 Mot eik⁶ thair cairis cauld,
 That first preissis⁷ with thé to play
 Be firth⁸, forrest, or fauld⁹.”

⁵ romances.

⁶ May add to.

⁷ endeavour.

⁸ enclosed land.

⁹ open pastures.

“Makyne, the nicht is soft and dry,
 The weddir is warme and fair,
 And the grene woid rycht neur us by
 To walk atour all quhair¹⁰:
 Thair ma na janglour¹¹ us espy
 That is to lufe contrair;
 Thairin, Makyne, bath ye and I
 Unsene we ma repair.”

¹⁰ To walk over
 everywhere.

¹¹ tattler.

“Robene, that world is all away,
 And quyt brocht till ane end;
 And nevir agane thairto, perfay¹,
 Sall it be as thow wend².
 For of my pane thow maid it play,
 And all in vane I spend;
 As thow hes done, sa sall I say,
 Murne on, I think to mend.”

¹ by my faith.

² weened,
 expected.

“Makyne, the howp of all my heill³,
 My hairt on thé is sett,
 And evir-mair to thé be leill⁴
 Quhill I may leif, but lett⁵;
 Nevir to faill, as utheris feill⁶,
 Quhat grace that evir I gett.”
 “Robene, with thé I will nocht deill;
 Adew! for thus we mett.”

³ hope of all my
 health.

⁴ loyal.

⁵ without
 ceasing.

⁶ as others fail.

Makyne went hame blyth anewche⁷
 Attour the holtis hair⁸.
 Robene murnit, and Makyne lewche⁹;
 Scho sang, he sichit sair¹⁰:
 And so left him bayth wo and wreuch¹¹,
 In dolour and in cair,
 Kepand his hird under a huche¹²
 Among the holtis hair.

⁷ enough.

⁸ Over the grey
 hills.

⁹ laughed.

¹⁰ sighed sore.

¹¹ woeful and
 wretched.

¹² cliff.

THE GARMOND OF GUDE LADEIS.*

WALD my gud Lady lufe me best,
And wirk eftir my will,
I suld ane garmond gudliest
Gar mak hir body till¹.

¹ Cause make for
her body.

Off he² honour suld be hir hud,
Upoun hir heid to weir,
Garneist with governance so gud,
Na demyng suld hir deir³.

² high.

³ No censure
should hurt
her.

Hir sark suld be hir body nixt,
Of chestetie so quhyt,
With schame and dreid togidder mixt,
The same suld be perfyte.

Hir kirtill suld be of clene constance,
Lasit with lesum lufe⁴,
The maillyheis of continuance⁵
For nevir to remufe.

⁴ Laced with
lawful love.

⁵ eyelet-holes of
continence.

* Lord Hailes considered this poem "a sort of paraphrase of 1 Tim. ii., 9-11," and Laing remarks that "Pinkerton (History, vol i., p. 434) refers to it as giving the best idea of the dress of a lady of that period; 'the complete attire consisting of hood, shift, kirtle (or gown and petticoat) tied with laces and adorned with mails or spangles; an upper gown or robe, purpled and furred, and adorned with ribbons; a belt; a mantle or cloak in bad weather; a hat, tippet, *patelet*, perhaps small ruff; a ribbon about the neck; sleeves, gloves, shoes and hose.'"

Hir gown suld be of gudliness,
 Weill ribband with renowne,
 Purfillit with plesour in ilk place¹,
 Furrit with fyne fassoun².

¹ each place.² fashion.

Hir belt suld be of benigntie,
 About hir middill meit;
 Hir mantill of humilitie,
 To tholl³ bayth wind and weit.

³ endure.

Hir hat suld be of fair having⁴,
 And hir tepat of trewth,
 Hir patelet of gude pansing⁵,
 Hir hals-ribbane⁶ of rewth⁷.

⁴ carriage.⁵ Her ruff of good thought.⁶ throat-ribbon.⁷ pity.

Hir slevis suld be of esperance,
 To keip hir fra dispair;
 Hir gluis of the gud govornance,
 To hyd hir fyngearis fair.

Hir schone⁸ suld be of fickernes⁹,
 In syne that scho nocht slyd;
 Hir hois of honestie, I ges,
 I suld for hir provyd.

⁸ shoes.⁹ certainty.

Wald scho put on this garmond gay,
 I durst sweir by my seill¹⁰,
 That scho woir nevyr grene nor gray
 That set hir half so weill.

¹⁰ happiness, salvation.

THE ABBAY WALK.*

ALLONE as I went up and doun
In ane Abbay was fair to se,
Thinkand quhat consolatioun
Was best in-to adversitie;
On caiss¹ I kest on syd myne é,
And saw this written upoun a wall,
Of quhat estait, Man, that thow be,
Obey, and thank thy God of all.

¹ By chance.

Thy kindome and thy grit empyre;
Thy ryaltie, nor riche array,
Sall nocht endeur at thy desyre,
Bot, as the wind, will wend away;
Thy gold, and all thy gudis gay,
Quhen fortoun list will fra thee fall:
Sen thow sic fampillis seis ilk day²,
Obey, and thank thy God of all.

² Since thou seest
such examples
each day.

* This title was given to the poem by Lord Hailes "from a like title given to a popular poem mentioned by Sir James Inglis" in *The Complaynt of Scotland*.

Job was maist riche, in Writ we find,
 Thobè maist full of cheritie;
 Job woux pure¹, and Thobè blynd,
 Baith tempit with adversitie.
 Sen blindnes wes infirmitie,
 And poverty wes naturall;
 Thairfoir rycht patiently bath he and he
 Obeyit, and thankit God of all.

¹ waxed poor.

Thocht² thow be blind, or haif ane halt,
 Or in thy face deformit ill,
 Sa it cum nocht throw thy defalt,
 Na man suld thé repreif by skill³.
 Blame nocht thy Lord, sa is his will;
 Spurn nocht thy fute aganis the wall;
 Bot with meik hairt and prayer still
 Obey, and thank thy God of all.

² Though.³ reprove by
reason (of it).

God of his justice mon⁴ correct }
 And of his mercie pètie haif; }
 He is ane Juge, to nane suspect⁵,
 To puneis synfull man and saif.
 Thocht thow be lord attour the laif⁶,
 And eftirwart maid bound and thrall,
 Ane pure begger, with skrip and staiff,
 Obey, and thank thy God of all.

⁴ must.⁵ by none to be
suspected.⁶ over the rest.

This changinge and grit variance
 Off erdly⁷ staitis up and doun
 Is nocht bot⁸ casualitie and chance,
 Sa⁹ sum men sayis, without ressoun,

⁷ earthly.⁸ only.⁹ As.

Bot be the grit provisioun
 Of God aboif that rewel thé sall;
 Thairfoir evir thow mak thé boun¹
 To obey, and thank thy God of all.

¹ ready.

In welth be meik, heich² not thy-self;
 Be glaid in wilfull povertie;
 Thy power and thy warldis pelf
 Is nocht bōt verry vanitie.
 Remembir him that deit on tre,
 For thy saik taistit the bittir gall,
 Quha heis law hairtis, and lawis he³;
 Obey, and thank thy God of all.

² exalt.

³ Who raises
 lowly hearts
 and puts down
 the high.

THE PRAIS OF AIGE.

IN-TYL ane garth¹, under ane reid roseir²,

Ane auld man, and decrepit, hard I syng;

Gay wes the noit, sweit was the voce and cleyr;

It wes grit joy to heir of sic ane thyng.

“And to my doume³,” he said, in his dytyng⁴,

“For to be young I wald nocht, for my wyss⁵,

Of all this warld to mak me lord and king:

The moyr of aige the nerar hevynis bliss.

¹ garden.

² a red rose-tree.

³ As to my fate.

⁴ tale, ditty.

⁵ after what I
know.

“Fals is this warld, and full of varyance,

Oureset with syt and uther synnys mo⁶;

Now trewth is tynt⁷, gyle hes the governance,

And wrachitness hes wrocht al weill to wo;

Fredoume is tynt, and flemyt⁸ the lordis fro,

And cuvattyce is all the cause of this:

I am content that yowthheid is ago⁹:

The moyr of aige the nerar hevynis blis.

⁶ Overcome with
sorrow and
other pities
more.

⁷ lost.

⁸ driven away.

⁹ gone.

“The stait of yowth I repute¹⁰ for na gude,

For in that stait grit perrell now I se;

Can nane gane-stand the rageing of his blude

Na yit be stabil quhill that he aigit be¹¹:

¹⁰ esteem.

¹¹ till he be aged.

Than of the thing that maist rejoysit he,
Na-thing remaynis for to be callit his;
For quhy? it was bot verray vanite:
The moyr of aige the nerar hevynis blyss.

¹ trust.

“This wrechit warld may na man trow¹; for quhy?
Of erdly joy ay sorrow is the end;
The gloyr of it can na man certify,

This day a king, the morne na-thing to spend!
Quhat haif we heyr bot grace us to defend!

² to amend our
fault.

The quhilk God grant us till amend our myss²,
That till his joy he may our saullis send;
The moyr of aige the nerar hevynis bliss.”

THE TESTAMENT OF CRESSEID.

ANE doolie sessoun to ane cairfull dyte¹

Suld correspond, and be equivalent.

Richt sa it wes quhen I began to wryte

This tragedie, the wedder richt fervent²,

Quhen Aries in middis of the Lent ;

Schouris of hail can fra the north discend,

That scantlie fra the cauld I nicht defend.

¹ Adoleful season
to a tale full
of woe.

² the weather
richt severe.

Yet nevertheles within myne oratur³

I stude, quhen Titan had his bemis bricht

Withdrawin doun, and sylit under cure⁴,

And fair Venus, the bewtie of the nicht,

Uprais, and set unto the west full richt

Hir golden face, in oppositioun

Of god Phebus, direct discending doun.

³ oratory.

⁴ concealed
under care.

Throwout the glas hir bemis brast⁵ sa fair,

That I nicht se on everie syde me by,

The northin wind had purifyit the air,

And sched the mistie cloudis fra the sky ;

The froist freisit, the blastis bitterly

Fra Pole Artick come quhisling loud and schill⁶,

And causit me remufe aganis my will.

⁵ burst.

⁶ shrill.

- For I traistit that Venus, luifis quene,
¹ promise. To quhome sum-tyme I hecht¹ obedience,
 My faidit hart of lufe scho wald mak grene;
 And therupon, with humbill reverence,
 I thocht to pray hir hie magnificence;
² was prevented. Bot for greit cauld as than I lattit was²,
 And in my chalmer to the fyre can pas.
- ³ Though love be hot. Thocht lufe be hait³, yit in ane man of age
 It kendillis nocht sa sone as in youtheid,
 Of quhome the blude is flowing in ane rage,
⁴ dull and dead. And in the auld the curage doif and deid⁴;
 Of quhilk the fire outward is best remeid,
 To help be phisike quhair that nature faillit
⁵ attempted. I am expert, for baith I have assailit⁵.
- ⁶ basked. I mend the fyre, and beikit⁶ me about,
 Than tuik ane drink my spreitis to comfort,
 And armit me weill fra the cauld thairout;
 To cut the winter nicht, and mak it schort,
⁷ quire, book. I tuik ane quair⁷, and left all uther sport,
 Writtin be worthie Chaucer glorious,
 Of fair Cresseid and worthie Troylus.
- And thair I fand, efter that Diomeid
 Ressavit had that lady bricht of hew,
⁸ started aside. How Troilus neir out of wit abraid⁸,
 And weipit soir, with visage paill of hew;
⁹ which despair. For quhilk wanhope⁹ his teiris can renew,
¹⁰ Till. Quhill¹⁰ Esperus rejoisit him agane:
¹¹ by whiles. Thus quhyle¹¹ in joy he levit, quhile in pane.

Of hir behest he had greit comforting,
 Traisting to Troy that scho suld mak retour,
 Quhilk he desyrit maist of eirdly thing;
 For why? scho was his only paramour:
 Bot quhen he saw passit baith day and hour
 Of hir ganecome¹, than sorrow can oppres
 His wofull hart, in cair and hevines.

¹ coming again.

Of his distres me neidis nocht reheirs,
 For worthie Chauceir, in the samin buik,
 In gudelie termis and in joly veirs
 Compylit hes his cairis, quha will luik.
 To brek my sleip ane uther quair I tuik,
 In quhilk I fand the fatall destenie
 Of fair Cresseid, that endit wretchitlie.

Quha wait² gif all that Chauceir wrait was trew?
 Nor I wait nocht gif this narratioun
 Be authoreist, or fenyeit of the new³
 Be sum pœit, throw his inventioun
 Maid to report the lamentatioun
 And wofull end of this lustie⁴ Cresseid;
 And quhat distres scho thoillit⁵, and quhat deid⁶.

² Who knows.

³ feigned anew.

⁴ pleasant.

⁵ suffered.

⁶ death.

Quhen Diomed had all his appetyte,
 And mair, fulfillit of this fair ladie,
 Upon ane uther he set his haill delyte,
 And send to hir ane lybell of repudie;
 And hir excludit fra his companie.
 Than desolait scho walkit up and doun,
 And, sum men sayis, in-to the court commoun.

O, fair Cresseid! the floure and *A per se*
 Of Troy and Grece, how was thow fortunait!
 To change in filth all thy feminitie,
 And be with fleschelie lust sa maculait¹,
 And go amang the Greikis air and lait,
 Sa giglotlike, takand thy foull plesance!
 I have pietie thow suld fall sic mischance.

¹ polluted.² censure.³ frailty.

Yit nevertheles, quhat-ever men deme² or say
 In scornfull langage of thy brukkilnes³,
 I sall excuse, als far furth as I may,
 Thy womanheid, thy wisdom, and fairnes;
 And quhilk Fortoun hes put to sic distres
 As hir pleisit, and na-thing throw the gilt
 Of thé, throw wickit langage to be spilt.

⁴ without.

This fair lady, in this wyse destitute
 Of all comfort and consolatioun,
 Richt privelie, but⁴ fellowship, on fute
 Disagysit passit far out of the toun
 Ane myle or twa, unto ane mansioun,
 Beildit full gay, quhair hir father Calchas
 Quhilk than amang the Greikis dwelland was.

Quhen he hir saw, the caus he can inquyre
 Of hir cuming? Scho said, siching full soir,
 "Fra Diomeid had gottin his desyre
 He wox werie, and wald of me no moir."
 Quod Calchas, "Douchter, weip thow not thairfoir,
 Peraventure all cummis for the best,
 Welcum to me, thow art full deir ane gest."

This auld Calchas, efter the law was tho¹, ¹ then.
 Wes keeper of the tempill, as ane preist,
 In quhilk Venus and hir sone Cupido
 War honourit, and his chalmer was thame neist², ² next.
 To quhilk Cresseid, with baill aneuch³ in breist, ³ woe enough.
 Usit to pas, hir prayeris for to say;
 Quhill at the last, upon ane solempne day,

As custome was, the pepill far and neir
 Befoir the none unto the tempill went
 With sacrifice devoit in thair maner:
 But still Cresseid, hevie in hir intent,
 In-to the kirk wald not hir-self present,
 For givin of the pepill ony deming
 Of hir expuls fra Diomeid the king;

Bot past into ane secreit orature,
 Quhair scho nicht weip hir wofull desteny.
 Behind hir bak scho cloisit fast the dure,
 And on hir kneis bair fell down in hy⁴, ⁴ in haste.
 Upon Venus and Cupide angerly
 Scho cryit out, and said on this same wyse,
 "Allace that ever I maid yow sacrifice!

"Ye gave me anis ane devine responsaill,
 That I suld be the flour of luif in Troy,
 Now am I maid an unworthie outwaill⁵, ⁵ outcast.
 And all in cair translatit is my joy.
 Quha sall me gyde? quha sall me now convoy,
 Sen⁶ I fra Diomeid and nobill Troylus ⁶ Since.
 Am clene excludit, as abject odious?

¹ blame.

"O fals Cupide, is nane to wyte¹ bot thow,
 And thy mother, of lufe the blind goddess!
 Ye causit me alwayis understand and trow
 The seid of lufe was sawin in my face,
 And ay grew grene throw your supplie and grace.
 Bot now, allace! that seid with froist is slane,
 And I fra luifferis left, and all forlane²."

² neglected.

Quhen this was said, doun in ane extasie
 Ravischit in spreit, intill ane dreame scho fell,
 And be apperance hard quhair scho did ly
 Cupide the king ringand ane silver bell,
 Quhilk men nicht heir fra hevin unto hell;
 At quhais sound befor Cupide appeiris
 The sevin Planetis discending fra thair spheiris,

Quhilk hes power of all thing generabill
 To reull and steir, be thair greit influence,
 Wedder and wind and coursis variabill.
 And first of all Saturne gave his sentence,
 Quhilk gave to Cupide litill reverence,
 Bot as ane busteous³ churle on his maneir,
 Come crabitlie with auster luik and cheir.

³ fierce, blustering.⁴ frosted.⁵ skin.⁶ shivered(?)⁷ hollow.⁸ end-drop.⁹ livid.

His face frosnit⁴, his lyre⁵ was lyke the leid,
 His teith chatterit, and cheverit⁶ with the chin,
 His ene drowpit, how⁷, sonkin in his heid,
 Out of his nois the meldrop⁸ fast can rin,
 With lippis bla⁹, and cheikis leine and thin,
 The iceschoklis that fra his hair doun hang
 Was wonder greit and as ane speir als lang.

Atour¹ his belt his lyart² lokkis lay

Felterit³ unfair, ovirfret⁴ with froistis hoir,
His garmound and his gyis⁵ full gay of gray,

His widderit weid⁶ fra him the wind out woir,
Ane busteous bow within his hand he boir,
Under his girdill ane flasche of felloun flanis⁷,
Fedderit with ice and heidit with hailstanis.

¹ Over.

² hoary.

³ tangled.

⁴ overspread.

⁵ guise, attire.

⁶ withered dress.

⁷ a sheaf of cruel arrows.

Than Juppiter richt fair and amiabill,

God of the starnis in the firmament,
And nureis to all thing generabill,

Fra his father Saturne far different,
With burelie⁸ face, and browis bricht and brent⁹, ⁸ pleasant.
Upon his heid ane garland wonder gay, ⁹ fair and smooth.
Of flouris fair, as it had bene in May.

His voice was cleir, as cristall wer his ene,

As goldin wyre sa glitterand was his hair,
His garmound and his gyis full gay of grene,

With golden listis¹⁰ gilt on everie gair¹¹,
Ane burelie brand about his middill bair,
In his right hand he had ane groundin¹² speir,
Of his father the wraith fra us to weir¹³.

¹⁰ edges.

¹¹ strip.

¹² sharpened.

¹³ to ward off the apparition from us.

Nixt efter him come Mars, the god of ire,

Of strife, debait, and all dissensioun,
To chide and fecht, als feirs as ony fyre,

In hard harnes, hewmound and habirgeoun¹⁴,
And on his hanche ane roustie fell fachioun¹⁵,
And in his hand hē had ane roustie sword,
Wrything his face, with mony angrie word.

¹⁴ helmet and coat of mail.

¹⁵ falchion.

Schaikand his sword, befor Cupide he come
 With reid visage and grislie glowrand ene¹,
 And at his mouth ane bullar² stude of fome,
 Lyke to ane bair quhetting his tuskis kene,
 Richt tuilyeour lyke, but temperance in tene³;
 Ane horne he blew with mony bosteous brag⁴,
 Quhilk all this warld with weir⁵ hes maid to wag.

¹ angry-staring eyes.

² mass.

³ brawler-like without t. in wrath.

⁴ fierce defiance.

⁵ war.

Than fair Phebus, lanterne and lamp of licht
 Of man and beist, baith frute and flourisching,
 Tender nureis, and banischer of nicht,
 And of the warld causing, be his moving
 And influence, lyfe in all eirdlie thing,
 Without comfort of quhome, of force to nocht
 Must all ga die that in this warld is wrocht.

As king royall he raid upon his chair,
 The quhilk Phaeton gydit sum-tyme unricht,
 The brichtness of his face, quhen-it was bair,
 Nane micht behald for peirsing of his sicht;
 This goldin cart with fyrie bemēs bricht
 Four yokkit steidis, full different of hew,

⁶ Without pause. But bait⁶ or tyring throw the spheiris drew.

The first was foyr, with mane als reid as rois,
 Callit Eoye⁷ in-to the Orient;
 The second steid to name hecht Ethios⁸,
 Quhitlie and paill, and sum-deill⁹ ascendent;
 The thrid Peros¹⁰, right hait and richt fervent;
 The feird was blak, callit Phlegonie¹¹,
 Quhilk rollis Phebus down in-to the sey.

⁷ Eōus (Ovid, Met. 77, 153).

⁸ called Æthon.

⁹ somewhat.

¹⁰ Pyrois.

¹¹ Phlegon.

Venus was thair present, that goddess gay,
 Her sonnis querrel for to defend, and mak
 Hir awin complaint, cled in ane nyce¹ array,
 The ane half grene, the uthir half sabill blak,
 Quhyte hair as gold, kemmit and sched abak,
 Bot in hir face semit greit variance,
 Quhyles perfyte treuth, and quhyles inconstance.

¹ simple.

Under smyling scho was dissimulait,
 Provocative with blenkis² amorous,
 And suddanely changit and alterait,
 Angrie as ony serpent vennemous,
 Richt pungitive with wordis odious.
 Thus variant scho was, quha list tak keip³,
 With ane eye lauch, and with the uthir weip.

² glances.³ who chooses
take heed.

In taikning⁴ that all fleschelic paramour
 Quhilk Venus hes in reull and governance,
 Is sum-tyme sweet, sum-tyme bitter and sour,
 Richt unstabill, and full of variance,
 Mingit⁵ with cairfull joy, and fals plesance,
 Now hait, now cauld, now blyith, now full of wo,
 Now grene as leif, now widderit and ago⁶.

⁴ token.⁵ Mingled.⁶ withered and
gone.

With buik in hand than come Mercurius,
 Richt eloquent and full of rethorie,
 With polite termis, and delicious,
 With pen and ink to report all reddie,
 Setting sangis⁷, and singand merilie.
 His hude was reid, heklit atouir his croun⁸,
 Lyke to ane poeit of the auld fassoun⁹.

⁷ i.e. to music.⁸ hooked over his
head.⁹ fashion.

Boxis he bair with fine electuairis,
 And sugerit syropis for digestioun,
 Spycis belangand to the pothecairis,
 With mony hailsum sweit confection;
 Docteur in phisick, cled in skarlot gown,
 And furrit weill, as sic ane aucht to be,
 Honest and gude, and not ane word culd lie.*

Nixt efter him come Lady Cynthia,
 The last of all, and swiftest in hir spheir,
 Of colour blak, buskit¹ with hornis twa,
 And in the nicht scho listis best appeir,
 Har as the leid, of colour na-thing cleir,
 For all hir licht scho borrowis at hir brother
 Titan, for of hir-self scho hes nane uther.

Hir gyse² was gray, and full of spottis blak,
 And on hir breist ane churle paintit full evin,
 Beirand ane bunche of thornis on his bak,
 Quhilk for his thift nicht clim na nar the hevin.
 Thus quhen thay gadderit war, thir Goddis sevin,
 Mercurius they cheisit with ane assent
 To be foir-speikar in the parliament.

Quha had bene thair, and lyking for to heir
 His facound³ toung and termis exquisite,
 Of rhetorick the prettick⁴ he nicht leir⁵,
 In breif sermone ane pregnant sentence wryte⁶.
 Befoir Cupide, veiling his cap alyte⁷,
 Speiris⁸ [he] the caus of that vocation;
 And he anone schew his intentioun.

* Mercury was "the god of thieves, pickpockets, and all dishonest persons."

¹ decked.

² attire.

³ graceful of
utterance.

⁴ practice.

⁵ learn.

⁶ i.e. how to
write.

⁷ a little.

⁸ Asks.

“Lo!” quod Cupide, “quha will blaspheme the name
 Of his awin god, outhir in word or deid,
 To all goddis he dois baith lak¹ and schame, ¹ reproach.
 And suld have bitter panis to his meid;
 I say this by yone wretchit Cresseid,
 The quhilk throw me was sum-tyme flour of lufe,
 Me and my mother starklie can reprove;

“Saying of hir greit infelicitie
 I was the caus and my mother Venus;
 Ane blind Goddes hir cald that nicht not se,
 With sclander and defame injurious.
 Thus hir leving unclene and lecherous
 Scho wald returne on me and my mother,
 To quhome I schew my grace abone all uther.

“And sen² ye ar all sevin deificait, ² since.
 Participant of devyne sapience,
 This greit injurie done to our hie estait,
 Me-think with pane we suld mak recompence;
 Was never to goddes done sic violence.
 As weill for yow as for myself I say,
 Thairfoir ga help to revenge, I yow pray.”

Mercurius to Cupide gave answeir,
 And said, “Schir King, my counsall is that ye
 Refer yow to the hiest planeit heir,
 And tak to him the lawest of degre,
 The pane of Cresseid for to modifie³; ³ formulate.
 As God Saturne, with him tak Cynthia.”
 “I am content,” quod he, “to tak thay twa.”

Than thus proceedit Saturne and the Mone,
 Quhen thay the mater rypelie had degest;
 For the dispyte to Cupide scho had done,
 And to Venus oppin and manifest,
 In all hir lyfe with pane to be opprest,
 And torment sair, with seiknes incurabill,
 And to all lovers be abominabill.

This dulefull sentence Saturne tuik on hand,
 And passit doun quhair cairfull Cresseid lay,
 And on hir heid he laid ane frostie wand,
 Than lawfullie on this wyse can he say;
 "Thy greit fairnes, and all thy bewtie gay,
 Thy wantoun blude, and eik thy goldin hair,
 Heir I exclude fra thé for evermair:

"I change thy mirth into melancholy,
 Quhilk is the mother of all pensivenes,
 Thy moisture and thy heit in cald and dry,
 Thyne insolence, thy play and wantones
 To greit diseis, thy pomp and thy riches
 In mortall neid and greit penuritie;
 Thow suffer sall, and as ane beggar die."

O cruell Saturne! fraward and angrie.
 Hard is thy dome, and too malitious.
 On fair Cresseid quhy hes thow na mercie,
 Quhilk was sa sweit, gentill, and amourous?
 Withdraw thy sentence, and be gracious,
 As thow was never, so schawis thow thy deid,
 Ane wraikfull[†] sentence gevin on fair Cresseid.

[†] revengeful.

Than Cynthia, quhen Saturne past away,
 Out of hir sait descendit down belyve¹,
 And red ane bill on Cresseid quhair scho lay,
 Contening this sentence diffinityve,
 "Fra heile² of bodie I thé now deprive,
 And to thy seiknes sal be na recure,
 But in dolour thy dayis to indure.

¹ quickly.² health.

"Thy cristall ene minglit with blude I mak,
 Thy voice sa cleir unplesand hoir and hace³,
 Thy lustie lyre⁴ ouirsprede with spottis blak,
 And lumpis haw⁵ appeirand in thy face;
 Quhair thow cummis ilk man sall fle the place,
 This sall thow go begging fra hous to hous,
 With cop and clapper lyke ane Lazarous."

³ aged (hoar) and hoarse.⁴ beauteous skin.⁵ livid.

This doolie dreame, this uglye visioun
 Brocht to ane end, Cresseid fra it awoik,
 And all that court and convocation
 Vanischit away. Than rais scho up and tuik
 Ane poleist glas, and hir schaddow culd luik;
 And quhen scho saw hir face sa deformait,
 Gif scho in hart was wa aneuch, God wait⁶!

⁶ woeful enough, God knows.

Weiping full sair, "Lo! quhat it is," quod sche,
 "With fraward langage for to mufe and steir
 Our craibit goddis, and sa is sene on me!
 My blaspheming now have I bocht full deir,
 All eirdly joy and mirth I set areir⁷.
 Allace this day! allace this wofull tyde!
 Quhen I began with my goddis for to chyde!"

⁷ behind.

Be this was said ane chyld come fra the hall
 To warne Cresseid the supper was reddy ;
 First knokkit at the dure, and syne¹ culd call,
 "Madame, your father biddis you cum in hy²,
 He has mervell sa lang on grouf³ ye ly ;
 And sayis, Your prayers bene too lang sum-deill⁴,
 The goddis wait all your intent full weill."

¹ afterwards.² in haste.³ grovelling,
lit. on belly.⁴ somewhat.

Quod scho, "Fair chylde, ga to my father deir,
 And pray him cum to speik with me anone."
 And sa he did, and said, "Douchter, quhat cheir?"
 "Allace," quod scho, "father, my mirth is gone!"
 "How sa?" quod he ; and scho can all expone,
 As I have tauld, the vengeance and the wraik⁵,
 For hir trespas, Cupide on hir culd tak.

⁵ wreaking.

He luikit on hir uglye lipper face,
 The quhilk befor was quhite as lillie flour ;
 Wringand his handis oftymes, he said, Allace,
 That he had levit to se that wofull hour !
 For he knew weill that thair was na succour
 To hir seiknes, and that dowblit his pane ;
 Thus was thair cair aneuch betuix thame twane.

Quhen thay togidder murnit had full lang,
 Quod Cresseid, "Father, I wald not be kend⁶,
 Thairfoir in secreit wyse ye let me gang⁷,
 Unto yone hospitall at the tounis end ;
 And thidder sum meit for cheritie me send
 To leif upon ; for all mirth in this eird⁸
 Is fra me gane, sic is my wickit weird⁹."

⁶ known.⁷ go.⁸ earth.⁹ fate.

Than in ane mantill; and ane bavar hat,
 With cop and clapper, wonder prively
 He opnit ane secreit yett¹, and outhairat
 Conveyit hir, that na man suld espy,
 Unto ane village half ane myle thairby,
 Delyverit hir in at the spittail hous,
 And daylie sent hir part of his almous.*

Sum knew hir weill, and sum had na knowledge
 Of hir, becaus scho was sa deformait,
 With bylis² blak oirspreid in hir visage,
 And hir fair colour laidit and alterait;
 Yit thay presumit for hir hie regait,
 And still murning scho was of nobill kin,
 With better will thairfoir they tuk hir in.

The day passit, and Phebus went to rest,
 The cloudis blak oirquhelmit all the sky;
 God wait gif Cresseid was ane sorrowfull gest,
 Seeing that uncouth fair and herbery³;
 But meit⁴ or drink scho dressit hir to ly
 In ane dark corner of the hous allone,
 And on this wyse, weiping, scho maid hir mone.

¹ gate.² boils.³ unaccustomed
fare and
lodging.⁴ without.

* Sir Walter Scott in the notes to his edition of *Sir Tristrem*, p. 362, says, in reference to a passage of that poem, "Want of cleanliness, of linen, of vegetables, of fresh meat in winter, but, above all, sloth and hardship, concurred to render the leprosy as common in Europe during the middle ages as it is in some eastern countries at this day. Nor were its ravages confined to the poor and destitute. Robert de Bruce died of this disorder, as did Constance, duchess of Bretagne, and Henry IV. of England. Various hospitals were founded by the pious for the reception of those miserable objects, whose disease, being infectious, required their exclusion from society. For the same reason, while they begged through the streets they usually carried the cup and clapper mentioned in the text. The former served to receive alms, and the noise of the latter warned the passenger to keep aloof, even while bestowing his charity."

THE COMPLAINT OF CRESSEID.

“O sop of sorrow sonken into cair!

O, captive Cresseid! now and ever-mair

¹ earth.

Gane is thy joy and all thy mirth in eird¹,

² blackened bare.

Of all blyithnes now art thou blaiknit bair².

Thair is na salve may saif thé of thy sair!

³ evil is thy fate.

Fell is thy fortoun, wickit is thy weird³,

⁴ thy woe putting
forth leaf.

Thy blys is baneist, and thy baill on breird⁴,

Under the eirth God gif I gravin wer,

Quhair nane of Grece nor yit of Troy nicht heird!

⁵ furnished.

“Quhair is thy chalmer wantounlie besene⁵,

⁶ pleasant.

With burely⁶ bed, and bankouris browderit bene⁷,

⁷ abundant
embroidered
tapestries.

Spycis and wyne to thy collatioun,

⁸ beauty.

The cowpis all of gold and silver schene⁸,

The sweit meitis servit in plaittis clene,

⁹ saffron(?)sauce.
¹⁰ seasoning.

With saipheron sals⁹ of ane gude sessoun¹⁰,

Thy gay garmentis with mony gudely gown,

¹¹ pin.

Thy plesand lawn pinnit with goldin prene¹¹?

¹² behind.

All is areir¹², thy greit royall renoun!

“Quhair is thy garding with thir greissis gay,

And fresche flowris, quhilk the Quene Floray

¹³ piece.

Had paintit plesandly on everie pane¹³,

Quhair thou was wont full merilye in May

To walk, and tak the dew be it was day,

¹⁴ thrush.

And heir the merle and mavis¹⁴ mony ane,

¹⁵ go.

With ladyis fair in carroling to gane¹⁵,

¹⁶ persons.

And se the royal rinks¹⁶ in thair array,

¹⁷ green.

In garmentis gay, garnischit on everie grane¹⁷?

"Thy greit triumphand fame and hie honour,
Quhair thow was callit of eirdlye wichtis flour,

All is decayit; thy weird is welterit so¹,
Thy hie estait is turnit in darknes dour²!
This lipper ludge tak for thy burelie bour,
And for thy bed tak now ane bunche of stro,
For waillit³ wyne and meitis thow had tho⁴,
Tak mowlit⁵ breid, peirrie⁶, and ceder sour;
Bot cop and clapper now is all ago.

¹ thy fate is
tossed so.
² hard.

³ chosen.
⁴ then.
⁵ mouldy.
⁶ small ale?

"My cleir voice and courtlie carrolling,
Quhair I was wont with ladyis for to sing,
Is rawk as ruik⁷, full hiddeous hoir and hace;

⁷ hoarse as rook.

My plesand port all utheris precelling,
Of lustines⁸ I was hald maist condung⁹,
Now is deformit; the figour of my face
To luik on it na leid¹⁰ now lyking hes:
Sowpit in syte¹¹, I say with sair siching,
Ludgeit amang the lipper leid, Allace!

⁸ beauty.
⁹ agreeable.

¹⁰ man.

¹¹ Drenched in
grief.

"O ladyis fair of Troy and Grece attend
My miserie, quhilk nane may comprehend,
My frivoll fortoun, my infelicitie,
My greit mischief, quhilk na man can amend.
Be-war in tyme, approchis neir the end,
And in your mynd ane mirrour mak of me;
As I am now, peradventure that ye,
For all your micht, may cum to that same end,
Or ellis war¹², gif ony war may be.

¹² worse.

"Nocht is your fairnes lot ane faiding flour,
Nocht is your famous laud and hie honour

Bot wind inflat in uther mennis eiris;
 Your roising reid to rotting sall retour.
 Exempill mak of me in your memour,
 Quhilk of sic thingis wofull witnes beiris.
 All welth in eird away as wind it weiris:
 Be-war, thairfoir, approchis neir the hour;
¹ stirs. Fortoun is fikkill quhen scho beginnis and steiris¹."

Thus chydand with her drierie destenye,
 Weiping, scho woik the nicht fra end to end.
 Bot all in vane; hir dule, hir cairfull cry,
 Micht not remeid, nor yit hir murning mend.
² passed. Ane lipper lady rais, and till hir wend²,
 And said, "Quhy spurnis thow aganis the wall,
 To sla thyself, and mend na-thing at all?"

"Sen thy weiping dowbillis bot thy wo,
 I counsall thé mak vertew of ane neid;
 To leir to clap thy clapper to and fro,
³ leper folk. And leir efter the law of lipper leid³."
⁴ help. Thair was na buit⁴, bot furth with thame scho yeid⁵
⁵ went. Fra place to place, quhill cauld and hounger sair
⁶ importunate. Compellit hir to be ane rank⁶ beggair.

That samin tyme of Troy the garnisoun,
 Quhilk had to chiftane worthie Troylus,
 Throw jeopardie of weir had strikken down
 Knichtis of Grece in number mervellous.
 With greit tryumphe and laude victorious
 Agane to Troy richt royallie they raid
⁷ abode. The way quhair Cresseid with the lipper baid⁷.

Seing that companie thai come all with ane stevin¹, ¹ noise.

Thay gaif ane cry, and schuik coppis gude speid.

Said, "Worthie lordis, for Goddis lufe of Hevin,

To us lipper part of your almous deid."

Than to thair cry nobill Troylus tuik heid ;

Having pietie, neir by the place can pas

Quhair Cresseid sat, not witting what scho was.

Than upon him scho kest up baith her ene,

And with ane blenk² it come in-to his thocht ² glance.

That he sum tyme hir face befoir had sene ;

Bot scho was in sic plye³ he knew hir nocht. ³ such plight.

Yit than hir luik into his mynd it brocht

The sweit visage and amorous blenking

Of fair Cresseid, sumtyme his awin darling.

Na wonder was, suppois⁴ in mynd that he

⁴ although.

Tuik hir figure sa sone, and lo, now, quhy :

The idole of ane thing in cace⁵ may be

⁵ chance.

Sa deip imprentit in the fantasy

That it deludis the wittis outwardly,

And sa appeiris in forme and lyke estait

Within the mynd, as it was figurait.

Ane spark of lufe than till his hart culd spring,

And kendlit all his bodie in ane fyre

With hait fevir ane sweit and trimbiling

Him tuik, quhill he was reddie to expyre ;

To beir his scheild his breist began to tyre ;

Within ane quhyle he changit mony hew,

And nevertheless not ane ane-uther knew.

For knichtlie pietie and memoriall

Of fair Cresseid ane gyrdill can he tak,

Ane purs of gold, and mony gay jowall,

¹ cast heavily. And in the skirt of Cresseid doun can swak¹:

Than raid away, and not ane word he spak,

Pensive in hart, quhill he come to the toun,

² oftymes. And for greit cair oft-syis² almaist fell doun.

The lipper folk to Cresseid than can draw,

To se the equall distributioun

Of the almous, but quhan the gold they saw

³ whisper. Ilk ane to uther prevelie can roun³,

And said, "Yone lord hes mair affectioun,

How-ever it be, unto yone lazarous,

Than to us all; we knaw be his almous."

⁴ knowledge. "Quhat lord is yone," quod scho, "have ye na feill⁴,
Hes done to us so greit humanitie?"

"Yes," quod a lipper man, "I knaw him weill:

⁵ noble. Schir Troylus it is, gentill and fre⁵."

Quhen Cresseid understude that it was he

⁶ stun of pain. Stiffer than steill thair stert ane bitter stound⁶

Throwout hir hart, and fell doun to the ground.

Quhen scho, ovircome with siching sair and sad,

With mony cairfull cry and cald "Ochane!

⁷ bested. Now is my breist with stormie stoundis stad⁷,

⁸ at loss for a dwelling. Wrappit in wo, ane wretch full will of wane⁸."

Than swounit scho oft or scho culd refrane,

And ever in hir swouning cryit scho thus:—

"O, fals Cresseid, and trew knicht Troylus!

“Thy lufe, thy lawtie¹, and thy gentilnes

¹ loyalty.

I countit small in my prosperitie;

Sa elevait I was in wantones,

And clam upon the fickill quheill² sa hie;

² i.e. of Fortune.
See *Kings*
Quair.

All faith and lufe I promissit to thé

Was in the self fickill and frivolous:

O, fals Cresseid, and trew knicht Troylus!

“For lufe of me thow kept gude continance,

Honest and chaist in conversatioun;

Of all women protectour and defence

Thow was, and helpit thair opinioun.

My mynd in fleschelic foull affectioun

Was inclynit to lustis lecherous.

Fy, fals Cresseid! O, trew knicht Troylus!

“Lovers be war, and tak gude heid about

Quhome that ye lufe, for quhome ye suffer paine,

I lat yow wit, thair is richt few thairout

Quhome ye may traist to have trew lufe againe:

Preif³ quhen ye will, your labour is in vaine.

³ Try.

Thairfoir I reid⁴ ye tak thame as ye find,

⁴ counsel.

For thay ar sad as widdercock⁵ in wind.

⁵ serious as
weather-vane.

“Becaus I know the greit unstabilnes,

Brukkil⁶ as glas, into my-self I say,

⁶ brittle.

Traisting in uther als greit unfaithfulnes,

Als unconstant, and als untrew of fay.

Thocht sum be trew, I wait richt few are thay.

Quha findis treuth, lat him his lady ruse⁷;

⁷ extol.

Nane but myself, as now, I will accuse.”

Quhen this was said, with paper scho sat doun,

And on this maneir maid hir testament :

¹ bequeath.

“ Heir I beteiche¹ my corps and carioun

² toads.

With wormis and with taidis² to be rent ;

My cop and clapper, and myne ornament,

And all my gold, the lipper folk sall have,

Quhen I am deid, to burie me in grave.

“ This royall ring, set with this rubie reid,

³ troth-token.

Quhilk Troylus in drowrie³ to me send,

To him agane I leif it quhan I am deid,

⁴ known.

To mak my cairfull deid unto him kend⁴ :

Thus I conclude schortlie, and mak ane end.

My spreit I leif to Diane, quhair scho dwellis,

⁵ marshes.

To walk with hir in waist woddis and wellis⁵.

“ O, Diomeid ! thow hes baith broche and belt

Quhilk Troylus gave me in takning

⁶ expired.

Of his trew lufe.”—And with that word scho swelt⁶.

And sone ane lipper man tuik of the ring,

⁷ Afterwards.

Syne⁷ buryit hir withouttin taryng.

To Troylus furthwith the ring he bair,

And of Cresseid the deith he can declair.

Quhen he had hard hir greit infirmitie,

Hir legacie and lamentatioun,

And how scho endit in sic povertie,

He swelt for wo, and fell doun in ane swoun,

⁸ ready.

For greit sorrow his hart to birst was boun⁸ :

Siching full sadlie, said, “ I can no moir,

Scho was untrew, and wo is me thairfoir !”

Sum said he maid ane tomb of merbell gray,
And wrait hir name and superscriptioun,
And laid it on hir grave, quhair that scho lay,
In goldin letteris conteining this ressoun:
“Lo, fair ladyis, Cresseid of Troyis toun,
Sumtyme countit the flour of womanheid,
Under this stane, late lipper, lyis deid!”

Now, worthie Wemen, in this ballet schort,
Made for your worschip¹ and instructioun,
Of cheritie I monische and exhort
Ming² not your lufe with fals deceptioun;
Beir in your mynd this schort conclusioun
Of fair Cresseid, as I have said befor.
Sen scho is deid I speik of hir no moir.

¹ honour.

² Mix.

PROLOGUE TO THE MORAL FABLES.

- IN middis of June, that joly sweet seasoun,
Quhen that fair Phebus with his bemis bricht
Had dryit up the dew fra daill and doun,
¹ radiance. And all the land maid with his lemis¹ licht,
In ane mornyng, betuix mid-day and nicht,
I rais and put all sleuth and sleip asyde,
² without guide. And to ane wod I went alone, but gyde².
- Sweit wes the smell of flouris quhyte and reid,
The noyis of birdis richt delitious,
³ boughs. The bewis³ braid blomit abone my heid,
The ground growand with gersis gratious.
Of all plesance that place wes plenteous,
With sweet odouris and birdis harmonie,
⁴ therefore. The morning myld, my mirth wes mair forthy⁴.
- ⁵ bushes and
twigs. The roisis reid arrayit on rone and ryce⁵,
The prymerois and the purpoure viola;
To heir it wes ane poynt of Paradyce,
⁶ did make. Sic mirth the mavis and the merle couth ma⁶.
⁷ hillside. The blossomis blyith brak up on bank and bra⁷,
The smell of herbis, and of foullis cry,
Contending quha suld haif the victorie.

Me to conserve then fra the sonnis heit,
 Under the schadow of ane hawthorne grene
 I lenit¹ down amang the flouris sweet,
 Syne² cled my heid and closit baith my ene. ¹ Presently.
 On sleip I fell amang thir bewis bene², ² abundant.
 And, in my dreme, methocht come throw the schaw³ ³ covert.
 The fairest man that euer befor I saw.

His gowne wes of ane claith als quhyte as milk,
 His chymeris⁴ wes of chambelote⁵ purpoure broun; ⁴ loose light gown.
 His hude of scarlet, bordourit weill with silk; ⁵ camlet cloth.
 On hekillit wyis⁶ untill his girdill down; ⁶ in manner of a cock's neck-feathers.
 His bonat round and of the auld fassoun;
 His beird wes quhyte, his ene wes greit and gray,
 With lokker⁷ hair, quhilk ouer his schulderis lay. ⁷ curling.

Ane roll of paper in his hand he bair,
 Ane swannis pen stikkand under his eir,
 Ane inkhorne, with ane prettie gilt pennair⁸, ⁸ pen-case.
 Ane bag of silk, all at his belt can beir:
 Thus was he gudolie graithit⁹ in his geir. ⁹ clad.
 Of stature large and with ane feirfull face
 Evin quhair I lay he come ane sturdie pace;

And said, "God speid, my sone:" and I wes fane¹⁰ ¹⁰ glad.
 Of that couth¹¹ word and of his cumpanie. ¹¹ familiar.
 With reverence I salusit him agane,
 "Welcome, father:" and he sat doun me by.
 "Displeis you nocht, my gude maister, thocht I¹² ¹² though I.
 Demand your birth, your facultie, and name,
 Quhy ye come heir, or quhair ye dwell at hame?"

"My sone," said he, "I am of gentill blude.

My native land is Rome, withouttin nay,

¹ went.

And in that towne first to the sculis I yude¹,

In civile law studyit full mony ane day,*

² dwelling.

And now my winning² is in hevin for ay.

³ am called.

Esope I hecht³; my wryting and my werk

⁴ known.

Is couth and kend⁴ to mony cunning clerk."

"O Maister Esope, poet laureate,

God wait⁵ ye ar full deir welcum to me.

⁵ knows.

Ar ye nocht he that all thir fabillis wrait

Quhilk in effect, suppois they fenyteit be⁶,

⁶ though they be
feigned.

Ar full of prudence and moralitie?"

"Fair sone," said he, "I am the samin man."

God wait gif that my hert was merie than.

I said, "Esope, my maister venerabill,

I yow beseik hartlie, for cheritie,

Ye wald nocht disdayne to tell ane prettie fabill,

Concludand with ane gude moralitie."

Schaikand his heid, he said, "My sone, lat be;

For quhat is worth to tell ane fenyteit taill

Quhen haly preiching may no-thing avail?

"Now in this world me-think richt few or nane

To Goddis word that hes devotioun.

The eir is deif, the hart is hard as stane,

Now oppin sin without correctioun,

The ee inclynand to the eirth ay down.

Sa roustie is the warld with canker blak

That now my taillis may lytill succour mak."

* Laing suggests that Henryson may in this passage be describing his own experience.

“Yit, gentill Schir,” said I, “for my requeist,

Nocht to displeis your fatherheid, I pray,
Under the figure of ane brutale beist

Ane morall fabill ye wald denyie^r to say.

^r deign.

Quha wait nor I may leir² and beir away

² learn.

Sum-thing thairby heirefter may availl?”

“I grant,” quod he, and thus begouth ane taill.

THE TAILL OF THE UPLANDIS MOUS AND THE BURGES MOUS.

ESOPE, myne author, makis mentioun

Of twa myis, and thay wer sisteris deir,

¹ a royal
borough.

Of quham the eldest dwelt in ane borrowis toun¹,

² dwelt in the
country
conveniently
near.

The uthir wynnit uponland weill neir²,

³ damage.

Richt solitar, quhyles under busk and breir,

⁴ chance
gettings.

Quhylis in the corne, and uthir mennis skaith³,

As outlawis dois, and levis on thair waith⁴.

This rurall Mous in-to the wynter-tyde

⁵ suffered.

Had hunger, cauld, and tholit⁵ greit distress;

The uthir Mous that in the burgh can byde

Wes gild-brother and maid ane free burgess,

⁶ without taxes.

Toll-fre als, but custum⁶ mair or less,

And fredome had to ga quhair-ever scho list,

⁷ chest.

Amang the cheis in ark and meill in kist⁷.

Ane tyme quhen scho wes full and unfute-sair

Scho tuke in mynde hir sister uponland,

And langit for to heir of hir weillfair,

⁸ in state of
subjection.

To se quhat lyfe scho had under the wand⁸;

Bairfute, allone, with pykestalf in hir hand,

As pure pilgryme scho passit out of toun

To seik hir sister baith over daill and down.

Furth mony wilsum¹ wayis can scho walk, ¹ lonely.
 Throw mosse and muir, throw bankis, busk, and breir
 Scho ranne cryand, quhill scho cam to ane balk, ² ridge of lea
 "Cum furth to me my awin sister deir! land.
 Cry peip anis³!" With that the Mous culd heir, ³ once.
 And knew her voce, as kinnisman will do,
 Be verray kynd⁴, and furth scho come hir to. ⁴ By very
 kinship.
 The hartlie⁵ joy, Lord God! gif ye had sene, ⁵ cordial.
 Was kithit⁶ quhen that thir twa sisteris met, ⁶ shown.
 And greit kyndenes was schawin thame betuene;
 For quhylis thay leuch, and quhylis for joy they gret⁷, ⁷ wept.
 Quhylis kissit sweit, and quhylis in armis plet⁸; ⁸ folded.
 And thus thay fure quhill⁹ soberit wes thair mude, ⁹ fared till.
 Syne fute for fute unto the chalmer yude¹⁰. ¹⁰ went.
 As I hard say, it was ane sober wane¹¹ ¹¹ dwelling.
 Of fog¹² and fairn full febillie wes maid, ¹² moss.
 Ane sillie scheill¹³ under ane steidfast stane, ¹³ A frail sheiling,
 Of quhilk the entres wes nocht hie nor braid; shelter.
 And in the samyn thay went but mair abaïd¹⁴, ¹⁴ without more
 Withoutin fyre or candill birnand bricht, delay.
 For commounlie sic pykeris¹⁵ luffis not licht. ¹⁵ such pilferers.
 Quhen thay wer lugit thus, thir selie¹⁶ myse, ¹⁶ these poor.
 The youngest sister unto hir butterie yeid,
 And brocht furth nuttis and peis in-stead of spyce.
 Gif this wes gude fair I do it on thame besyde.
 The burges Mous promptit furth in pryde,
 And said, "Sister, is this your daylie fude?"
 "Quhy not," quod scho, "is nocht this meit rycht
 gude?"

"Na, be my saull, I think it bot ane scorne."
 "Madame," quod scho, "ye be the mair to blame.
 My mother said, sister, quhen we were borne,
 That ye and I lay baith within ane wame:
 I keip the rate and custume of my dame,
 And of my leving in-to povertie,
 For landis haif we nane in propertie."

"My fair sister," quod scho, "haif me excusit.
 This rude dyet and I can nocht accord.
 Till tender meit my stomok is ay usit,
 For quhylis I fair als weill as ony lord.
 Thir widdirit¹ peis and nuttis, or² thay be bord,
 Will brek my teith and mak my wame full sklender³,
 Quhilk wes befor usit to meittis tender."

¹ These
withered.
² ere.
³ lank.

"Weill, weill, sister," quod the rurall Mous,
 "Gif it pleis yow, sic thingis as ye se heir,
⁴ lodging. Baith meit and drink, harberie⁴ and hous,
 Sal be your awin, will ye remane all yeir;
 Ye sall it haif with blyith and merie cheir,
⁵ messes, provisions. And that suld mak the maissis⁵ that ar rude,
 Amang freindis richt tender and wonder gude.

"Quhat plesure is in feistis delicate,
 The quhilkis ar gevin with ane glowm and brow?
 Ane gentill hart is better recreat
⁶ give possession of. With blyith curage than seith⁶ till him ane kow:
 Ane modicum is mair for till allow,
 Swa that gude-will be kerver at the dais,
⁷ ill-humoured look. Than thrawin vult⁷ and mony spycit mais."

For all hir merie exhortatioun,

This burges Mous had lytill will to sing,

Bot hevilie scho kest hir browis down,

For all the daynteis that scho culd hir bring.

Yit at the last scho said, half in hething¹, 1 scorn.

“Sister, this victuall and your royall feist

May weill suffice unto ane rurall beist.

“Lat be this hole, and cum in-to my place,

I sall to yow schaw be experience

My Gude-Fryday is better nor your Pace². 2 Easter-feast.

My dische-weschingis is worth your hail³ expence; 3 whole.

I haif housis anew⁴ of greit defence; 4 enough.

Of cat nor fall-trap I haif na dreid.”

“I grant,” quod scho; and on togidder thay yeid⁵. 5 went.

In stubbill array, throw rankest gers and corne,

And under buskis⁶, prevelie couth they creip. 6 bushes.

The eldest wes the gyde and went beforen,

The younger to hir wayis tuke gude keip⁷. 7 heed.

On nicht thay ran, and on the day can sleip,

Quhill in the morning or the laverock sang⁸ 8 ere lark sang.

Thay fand the toun, and in blythlie couth gang⁹. 9 did go.

Nocht fer fra thyne¹⁰ unto ane worthie wane 10 thence.

This burges brocht thame sone quhar thai suld be.

Without God speid thair herberie wes tane

In-to ane spence¹¹ with vittell greit plentie, 11 larder.

Baith cheis and butter upone thair skelfis hie¹², 12 shelves high.

And flesche and fische aneuch, baith fresche and salt,

And sekkis full of meill and eik of malt.

- Efter, quhen thay disposit wer to dyne,
¹ washed. Withouttin grace thay wesche¹ and went to meit,
 With all the coursis that cuikis culd defyne,
² cut off in great slices. Muttoun and beif strikin in tailyeis greit²;
 And lordis fair thus couth thay counterfeit,
 Except ane thing—thay drank the watter cleir
 Instead of wyne; bot yit thay maid gude cheir.
- With blyith upcast³ and merie countenance
³ raillery. The eldest sister sperit at hir gaist⁴,
⁴ asked her guest. Gif that scho be ressonne fand difference
⁵ sorry. Betuix that chalmer and hir sarie⁵ nest?
 “Yea dame,” quod scho, “How lang will this lest?”
⁶ wot. “For evermair, I wait⁶, and langer to.”
 “Gif it be swa ye ar at eis,” quod scho.
- Til eik⁷ thair cheir ane subcharge⁸ furth scho brocht,
⁷ To add to. Ane plait of grottis⁹ and ane dische full of meill,
⁸ second course. ⁹ oats with husks removed. Thraf-caikkis¹⁰ als I trow scho spairit nocht
¹⁰ wheaten cakes. Aboundantlie about hir for to deill,
 And mane¹¹ fyne scho brocht in-steid of geill¹²,
¹¹ a rich bread. ¹² jelly. And ane quhyte candill out of ane coffer stall¹³
¹³ stolen. In-steid of spyce to gust thair mouth withall.
- Thus maid thay merie quhill¹⁴ thay nicht na mair,
¹⁴ till. And, Haill, Yule, haill! cryit upon hie.
 Yit efter joy oftymes cummis cair,
 And troubill efter greit prosperitie,
 Thus, as thay sat in all thair jolitie,
¹⁵ butler. The Spenser¹⁵ come with keyis in his hand,
 Opinit the dure, and thame at denner fand.

Thay taryit nocht to wesche as I suppose,
 But on to ga quha that nicht forrest win¹.
 The burges had ane hoill, and in scho gois,
 Hir sister had na hoill to hyde hir in;
 To se that selie Mous it wes greit syn,
 So desolate and will of ane gude reid²,
 For veray dreid scho fell in swoun neir deid.

¹ attain.² at a loss for
good counsel.

Bot, as God wald, it fell ane happy cace³
 The Spenser had na laser for to byde,
 Nouthur to seik nor serche, to skar nor chace,
 Bot on he went, and left the dure up wyde.
 The bald burges his passing weill hes spyde;
 Out of hir hoill scho come, and cryit on hie,
 "How fair ye sister? Cry peip quhair-ever ye be?"

³ chance.

This rural Mous lay flatling on the ground,
 And for the deith scho wes full sair dredand,
 For till hir hart straik mony wofull stound⁴;
 As in ane fever scho trimbillit fute and hand,
 And quhan hir sister in sic ply⁵ hir fand,
 For verray pietie scho began to greit⁶,
 Syne confort hir with wordis hunny sweet.

⁴ pain-shocks.⁵ such plight.⁶ weep.

"Quhy ly ye thus? Ryse up my sister deir!
 Cum to your meit, this perrell is overpast."
 The uther answerit hir, with hevie cheir,
 "I may nocht eit, sa sair I am agast.
 I had levir⁷ thir fourtie dayis fast,
 With watter-caill⁸, and to gnaw benis or peis,
 Than all your feist, in this dreid and diseis."

⁷ liefer, rather.⁸ broth made
without meat.

- ¹ caused. With fair tretie yit scho gart¹ hir upryse,
 And to the burde thay went and togidder sat,
 And scantlie had thay drunken anis or twyse
 Quhen in come Gib-Hunter, our jolie cat,
 And bad God-speid. The burges up with that,
 And till the hoill scho went as fyre of flint.
- ² Grimalkin.
³ seized. Bawdronis² the uther be the bak hes hint³.
- Fra fute to fute he kest hir to and fra,
⁴ playful. Quhylis up, quhylis doun, als cant⁴ as ony kid.
⁵ Sometimes. Quhylis⁵ wald he lat hir run under the stra,
⁶ hide-and-seek. Quhylis wald he wink, and play with her buk-hid⁶
 Thus to the selie Mous greit pane he did,
 Quhill at the last, throw fortune and gude hap,
 Betuix ane burde and the wall scho crap.
- ⁷ partition. And up in haist behind ane parpalling⁷
 Scho clam so hie that Gilbert nicht not get hir,
⁸ claw. Syne be the cluke⁸ thair craftelie can hing
 Till he wes gane, hir cheir wes all the bettir;
⁹ prevent. Syne doun scho lap quhen thair wes nane to let⁹
 hir,
 And to the burges Mous loud can scho cry,
 "Fairweill, sister, thy feist heir I defy!"
- ¹⁰ Thy feast is mingled.
¹¹ sauce. "Thy mangerie is myngit¹⁰ all with cair,
 Thy guse is gude, thy gansell¹¹ sour as gall;
 The subcharge of thy service is bot sair,
 So sall thow find heir-efterwart may fall.
- ¹² partition wall. I thank yone courtyne and yone perpall wall¹²
 Of my defence now fra ane crewell beist.
 Almychty God keip me fra sic ane feist!

"Wer I in-to the kith¹ that I come fra, ¹ familiar place.
 For weill nor wo, suld never cum agane."
 With that scho tuke hir leif and furth can ga,
 Quhylis throw the corne and quhylis throw the
 plane.
 Quhen scho wes furth and fre scho wes ful fane², ² glad.
 And merilie merkit³ unto the mure. ³ hastened, *lit.*
rode.
 I can nocht tell how efterwart scho fure⁴, ⁴ fared.

Bot I hard say scho passit to hir den,
 Als warme als woll, suppose⁵ it wes nocht greit, ⁵ although.
 Full benely stuffit, baith but and ben⁶, ⁶ abundantly
furnished,
both outer
and inner
room.
 Of beinis and nuttis, peis, ry, and quheit;
 Quhen-ever scho list scho had aneuch to eit
 In quyet and eis, withoutin ony dreid;
 Bot to hir sisteris feist na mair scho yeid.

MORALITAS.

Friendis, ye may fynd, and⁷ ye will tak heid, ⁷ if.
 In-to this fabill ane gude moralitie.
 As fitchis myngit ar with nobill feid,
 Swa intermynglit is adversitie
 With eirthlie joy, swa that na estait is fre,
 And als troubill and sum vexatioun;
 And namelie⁸ thay quhilk climmis up maist hie, ⁸ notoriously.
 That ar nocht content with small possessioun.

Blissit be sempill lyfe withoutin dreid!
 Blissit be sober feist in quyetie!
 Quha hes aneuch, of na mair hes he neid,
 Thocht it be lytill in-to quantitie.

Greit abundance and blind prosperitie
Oftymes makis ane evill conclusioun.

The sweitest lyfe thairfor in this cuntrie
¹ security. Is sickernes¹, with small possessioun.

O wantoun man, that usis for to feid
Thy wambe, and makis it ane god to be,
² without fear. Luik to thy-self! I warne thee wele, but dreid²:
The cat cummis and to the mous hes ee.
Quhat vaillis than thy feist and rialtie,
With dreidfull hart and tribulacioun?
Thairfoir best thing in eird, I say, for me,
Is blyithnes in hart, with small possessioun.

³ a tiny flame. Thy awin fyre, my friend, sa it be bot ane gleid³,
It warmis weill, and is worth gold to thee;
And Solomon sayis, gif that thow will reid,
“Under the hevin it can nocht better be
Than ay be blyith and leif in honestie.”
Quhairfoir I may conclude be this ressoun,
Of eirthly joy it beiris maist degrie,
Blyithnes in hart, with small possessioun.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

A LIKENESS in some respects has already been remarked between the temper and condition of Rome in the time of Augustus and of Scotland in the time of James IV. The resemblance may even be traced in the personality of the poets of the two epochs. Gavin Douglas, the courtly poet-churchman of James the Fourth's time, may in some degree be likened to the grave and stately Virgil, whose work he translated ; and still more closely may a likeness be remarked, in character and fortunes, between the Roman Horace and the most brilliant poet of the middle ages in Scotland, William Dunbar. Both of these latter were courtiers by compulsion, longing continually to escape to the quiet of easy ways. Both were keen men of the world and epicureans by nature, loving pleasure, and without any burning desire to inflame the world with new ideals ; both had a twinkle of the eye for the peccadilloes of themselves or their friends, and a curl of the lip that could give a bitter turn to satire upon their enemies ; while both used supreme poetic gifts, prodigal of form and colour, largely for the purpose of securing material favours, and as a resource for the

expression of private and personal feeling. If in anything they differed it was that while the Roman poet apparently with calm wisdom took what fortune brought him, and made the most of it, there was in the heart of the Scottish makar* a hunger, wistful, eager, that was to ask to the end unsatisfied. Behind all the glory of those days the reign of James IV. was a time of failing faith in Scotland. The ancient religion of the country was crumbling in corruption to ruin, and men, Dunbar among them, were seeking, in the absence of a larger vision, to live for the immediate pleasures of the hour. Of the dweller in such a time, the heart self-centred in its own desires, the ancient saying remains perennially true, "He that seeketh his life shall lose it."

Born, it is supposed, about the year 1460, Dunbar, from allusions in his famous "Flying with Kennedy," appears to have been a native of Lothian and a member of Cospatrick's clan. Laing was inclined to consider him a grandson of Sir Patrick Dunbar of Beill in East Lothian, a younger son of the tenth Earl of March. In 1475 he was sent to the University of St. Andrews, where he received the degree of B.A. in 1477, and of M.A. in 1479. His life for the following twenty years is but vaguely known. It is possible that he pursued his studies at Oxford, one of his poems bearing the colophon "Quod Dunbar

* Dr. Irving quotes from Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetry* a remark upon the similarity between the European word "poet," from the Greek *poiein*, to make, and the native northern term "makar," or maker; "which name, how high and incomparable a title it is, I had rather were knowne by marking the scope of other sciences, then by my partiall allegation."

at Oxinfurde.” But there is an Oxenford Castle near Edinburgh whence the poem may have been dated, or Dunbar may have written it when casually visiting the English university town. From his poem “How Dunbar wes desyrd to be ane Freir” it is to be gathered that, entering the Order of St. Francis, the Gray Friars, he spent several years of novitiate as a wandering preacher, making good cheer in every pleasant town between Berwick and Calais, mounting the pulpit at Dernton and Canterbury, even crossing the Straits of Dover, and exercising his profession through Picardy. In these wanderings he pleads guilty to “mony wrink and wyle, quhilk mycht be flemit with na haly watter;” from which confession it may be understood that he was neither much better nor much worse than the other preaching friars of his time.

A little later, from allusions in his poems, he appears to have entered the service of James IV., and to have been employed on several of that monarch’s numerous embassies to foreign courts. It is known, at any-rate, that in 1491 he was residing at Paris, probably in connection with the embassy there. In 1500 he received from his royal master a pension of £10 as a foretaste of favours to come. In the following year he went to England with the ambassadors sent to conclude negotiations for the marriage of James to the Princess Margaret. There during the state festivities he was styled “the Rhymer of Scotland,” and upon at least one occasion he is recorded as having given evidence of his powers. “In the Cristmas week,” says the chronicler,

“the Mair had to dyner the ambassadors of Scotland, whom accompanied my Lord Chaunceler and other Lords of the realm ; where, sitting at dyner, ane of the said Scottis givying attendance upon a Bishop Ambassador, the which was reputed to be a Proto-notary of Scotland and servant of the Ld. Bishop, made this balade.” The “balade,” which is given at length, is that beginning, “London thou art of townes *A per se*.”*

During the embassy Dunbar is known to have received from Henry VII. two separate gifts of £6 13s. 4d., and on his return to Edinburgh the Treasurer's accounts show him to have received £5 in addition to his salary. Apart from the joyous occasion, it is probable that these gifts mark the special approbation of the poet's services by the English and Scottish monarchs. It was at this period (1503) that, besides several poems describing the attractions of the young princess, he composed his magnificent allegory, “The Thrissil and the Rois,” upon the marriage of James and Margaret. This work may be taken to have crowned his services as laureate. At anyrate it is certain that from the time of its composition he lived much at court, apparently on familiar terms with the king and queen. In one poem he describes “A Dance in the Quenis Chalmer” in which he himself takes part.

Than cam in Dunbar the mackar ;
On all the flure there was nane frackar.

* The incident is quoted from MS. Cott. Vitell. A.xvi., by Dr. Æneas Mackay (*Introduction to Dunbar*), who notes that though the reference is to Dunbar, it was Foreman who was the Proto-notary.

To another composition, "The Petition of the Gray Horse, Auld Dunbar," in which the poet begs to be housed and stalled, there are appended, under the heading "*Responsio Regis*," eight lines of direction to the royal treasurer, which, there is fair reason to suppose, may have been added by the king's own hand.

But with whatever familiarity James was willing to treat Dunbar at court, and however far he may have seen fit to assist him in other ways, he refrained from putting the coping-stone upon his benefits, and died without granting the chief object of the poet's ambition, a church benefice. There is no reason for doubting the kindness of the king's regard for his courtier. In 1504 Dunbar performed mass before James for the first time, and on that occasion was munificently rewarded. In 1507 his pension was increased to £20, and in 1510 to £80, to be paid until he should be promoted to a benefice of £100 or more. And in 1511 he appears to have been in the queen's train when she visited the north of Scotland, to judge from the circumstantial description of her welcome in his poem "Blyth Aberdein." Nevertheless, for reasons which can now only be conjectured, the long-hoped-for benefice was never conferred. It has been suggested that for this omission Dunbar's own imprudence may have been to blame. By his own confession his career as a friar had not been of the most circumspect sort, and many of his poems are, it must be confessed, both indecent and irreverent, one of them, "We that are here in Hevin's

Glory," being a deliberate profane parody of the litanies, while another, "To the Quene," contains language which might offend a modern courtesan. Conspicuous piety, however, was by no means necessary to the candidate for church preferment in those days, and only the most open and gross profligacy could have stood in the way of the promotion of an ecclesiastic. A more probable cause of Dunbar's prayers for a benefice remaining unanswered, Laing has suggested, might be the desire of James to keep the poet about his court. It is well known to have been part of the policy of that gallant and enlightened sovereign to retain about him a court of such learning and brilliance as should both impress the ambassadors of foreign powers and render illustrious the country's annals of the time. Whatever the reason, though Dunbar never ceased, by petition, innuendo, and satire, to beg for what he desired, James with a smile, as little embarrassed as might be, appears to have put the petition aside, making up for the main refusal by sundry gifts, pensions, and perquisites. The last of these, a payment of the small sum of forty-two shillings, appears in the treasurer's accounts for 1st April, 1513. Five months afterwards the fortunes of Dunbar were to fall with the pride of Scotland, the gallant James himself, on the field of Flodden.

The cloud which then settled on the country obscures the remainder of the poet's life. It is possible that his pension continued to be paid, the treasurer's accounts from 1513 to 1515, and from 1518 to 1522 having been lost. And it is just possible that

before marching to the field James conferred upon Dunbar his long-craved-for desire, a benefice. But the probability is that with the death of the king, and the unpopularity of the queen, the lamp of the poet's hopes went out, leaving the rest of his life in the darkness of disappointment. From several of his poems it is to be gathered that he lived to an advanced age. He was alive in 1517, as one of his compositions celebrates the passing of the Regent Albany into France in that year. The year 1520 is generally assigned as the date of the poet's death, and it is at least certain that he was dead ten years later, since the fact is alluded to in the prologue to "The Complaynt of the Papingo" written by Sir David Lindsay about 1530.

Before he died a change seems to have come upon the spirit of Dunbar. The levity of his earlier years appears to have been forsaken, and several of his poems are composed in a moral and religious strain. It would seem as if at last "the false world's wavering," the bitterness of final disappointment, had broken his gay and ambitious heart, and filled him with a profound sadness. It was a fit if sorrowful end for a career so full of contradictions. At war throughout with destiny, denied the worldly prize he craved, debarred by his vows from the solace of woman's love, Dunbar's life was typical of the *genus irritabile*. A parallel cannot fail to be seen between his fate and the fate of his great successor Robert Burns. Both, with hearts too keenly alive and eager for the joy of life, were doomed to meet only "the slings and arrows

of outrageous fortune," and in both their real achievement, the blaze of poetry which has been their magnificent legacy to Scotland, was struck, as if by accident, out of too sharp contact with the flinty ways of life. But between the two there was a vital difference. While the sorrows of the Ayrshire poet opened his heart to the pathos of existence and gave to his verse its high tragic quality, its profound pity and tenderness, disappointment only filled the heart of Dunbar with bitterness and drove the iron into his soul.

The first volume issued from the Scottish press, the book printed by Chepman & Myllar in 1508, contained several of Dunbar's poems, including "The Thrissil and the Rois," "The Goldyn Targe," and "The Lament for the Makaris." Only one copy of this volume, that in the Advocates' Library, is known to exist, but from this copy the book was reprinted in 1827 with the title of *The Knightly Tale of Gologras and Gawane, and other Ancient Poems*. The majority of the poet's existing works have been preserved in manuscripts, the Bannatyne MS., 1568, the Asloan MS., 1575, the Maitland MS. in the Pepysian Library, and the Reidpeth MS., 1623, in the University Library, Cambridge, each containing several. From these sources detached poems were printed in the collections of Allan Ramsay, John Pinkerton, Lord Hailes, and James Sibbald. But it remained to Mr. David Laing in 1834 to issue the first collected edition of the works of Dunbar, as "the best monument that could be erected to his genius." A supplement to this

was issued in 1875 ; in 1873 appeared in Edinburgh "The Works of William Dunbar, including his Life," by James Paterson ; and in 1883 a new edition of the poet's works was prepared for the Scottish Text Society by Mr. John Small, M.A., with, in 1888, a copious introduction by Dr. Æneas Mackay. Dunbar has also received attention on the Continent, Dr. Mackay declaring Prof. Schipper's edition (Berlin, 1884), to be the best book on the poet.

Apart from the works which must inevitably have been lost, no fewer than a hundred and one poems remain to the present day accredited to the genius of Dunbar. Of eleven of these, including the scarcely doubtful "Freiris of Berwik," the authenticity is not absolutely proved, but the remaining ninety include the work upon which his chief fame rests. No early poet has attempted so great a variety, either in subject, in style, or in form of verse, as Dunbar. In varying temper and on varying occasion he has essayed nearly every rôle of poetry, and to each he has given the supreme touch of the master-hand. Allegory, satire, and moral musing, invective, comic narrative, and natural description, personal pleading, courtly compliment, and the wild riot of Rabelaisian farce, all are here, treading each inimitably its appropriate measure. Smock and gay doublet, blackthorn cudgel and friar's hood, flashing rapier and dazzling pageant dress, each is assumed as occasion asks, and none is laid down till its part has been played to perfection.

In the stateliest efforts of his muse Dunbar followed the poetic fashion of his time. "The Goldyn Targe"

and "The Thrissil and the Rois" are allegories in the strain introduced to Scotland by the great poem of James the First. Of these two "The Thrissil and the Rois" shares the advantage of "The Kingis Quair" in having for its subject a historic fact. An interest beyond that of most allegories is added to Dunbar's poem by the knowledge that it celebrates the union between James IV. and the Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., which was to have such momentous issue three generations later in the union of the English and Scottish crowns. The event is celebrated with a richness of colour, imagery, and music, and a wealth and splendour of description which are hardly to be rivalled in the same field. In this poem, describing the young queen, Dunbar rises to his noblest vision of womanhood, and it may well be believed that such an epithalamium set the seal to a lasting friendship between the royal pair and the poet. By Langhorne in his *Genius and Valour* it was named as the chief work of its author.

In nervous strains Dunbar's bold music flows
And Time still spares the Thistle and the Rose.

"The Goldyn Targe," nevertheless, has by some been considered Dunbar's masterpiece in that style of poetry. "All the beauties of 'The Thistle and the Rose,'" says Dr. Merry Ross, "are here seen in rarer and more sparkling perfection. The scenes and figures are painted in brighter colours, and the music of the verse has a more voluptuous swell." The intention of the poem is to set forth that the golden targe, or shield of reason, proves an untrustworthy defence

against the assaults of love. From its gorgeous opening the pageant of the poet's fantasy moves on, glowing and glittering, fair, and alive with swaying, sensuous imagery, without a lapse, to the end, a picture appropriate to, and worthy of, the vital truth which it illustrates.

Another brief allegory by Dunbar on a like subject, beginning "Sen that I am a Presoneir," has a charm of its own in its lighter but still perfect setting.

To Chaucer must be attributed the suggestion of the two considerable poems, "The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo" and "The Freiris of Berwik." The latter is a comic tale, modelled exactly on Chaucer's style, but related with a sustained vigour and interest which characterises only the best of that poet's work. It is to be regretted that the authorship of the poem is not absolutely attested. "If," says a competent critic, "'The Freiris of Berwik' is not the work of Dunbar, then Scotland has a nameless poet of the same age, who, in comic humour, richness of invention, knowledge of human nature, skill in the arrangement of detail, and a charming vivacity of narrative, rivals the author of the *Canterbury Tales*." "The Freiris of Berwik" furnished Allan Ramsay with something more than the suggestion of his tale of "The Monk and the Miller's Wife." "The Tua Mariit Wemen and the Wedo" treats of a subject somewhat similar to that of Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Tale," but the methods and morals of the two poems are widely different. Dunbar's poem "presents us with the only specimen of blank verse which the ancient

Scottish language affords." The rhythm is of the kind employed by the early Anglo-Saxon poets, and borrowed from them by the author of "*Piers Plowman*." Alliteration supplies the place of rhyme. In each double line there should be three words beginning with the same letter, and by the rule two of these should occur in the first and the other should begin the second part of the line. Neither Dunbar nor the author of "*Piers Plowman*," however, followed the rule exactly. The Scottish poem has been justly praised for its richness of description, though its language, owing to the necessities of the versification, may sometimes appear obscure. The opening passage, as perhaps the finest, may be quoted :

Apon the Midsummer ewin, mirriest of nichtis,
 I muvit furth allane, neir as midnight wes past,
 Besyd ane gudlie grein garth, full of gay flouris,
 Hegeit of ane huge hicht with hawthorne treis,
 Quhairon ane bird on ane bransche so birst out hir notis
 That neuer ane blythfullar bird was on the beuche harde.
 Quhat throw the sugarat sound of hir sang glaid
 And throw the sauar sanatiue of the sueit flouris,
 I drew in derne to the dyk to dirkin efter myrthis ;
 The dew donkit the daill and dynnit the foulis.

I hard, vnder ane holyn hewinlie grein hewit,
 Ane hie speiche, at my hand, with hautand wourdis ;
 With that in haist to the hege so hard I intrang
 That I was heildit with hawthorn and with heynd leveis.
 Throw pykis of the plet thorne I presandlie luikit
 Gif ony persoun wald approche within that plesand garding.

I saw thre gay ladeis sit in ane grein arber,
 All grathit in-to garlandis of fresche gudelie flouris.
 So glitterit as the gold wer thair glorius gilt tressis,
 Quhill all the gressis did gleme of the glaid hewis.
 Kemmit was thair cleir hair, and curiously sched

Attour thair schulderis doun schyre, schyning full bricht,
 With curches, cassin thame abone, of kirsip cleir and thin.
 Thair mantillis grein war as the gress that grew in May sessoun,
 Fetrit with thair quhyt fingeris about thair fair sydis.
 Of ferlifull fyne favour war thair faceis meik,
 All of flurist fairheid, as flouris in June,
 Quhyt, seimlie, and soft, as the sweit lillies,
 New vpspred vpon spray, as new spynist rose.

Arrayit ryallie about with mony rich wardour,
 That Nature full nobillie annamalit fine with flouris
 Off alkin hewis under hewin that ony heynd knew,
 Fragrant, all full of fresche odour fynest of smell,
 Ane marbre tabile coverit wes befor thair thre ladeis
 With ryale cowpis apon rawis, full of ryche wynis.
 And of thir fair wlonkes, with tua [that] weddit war with lordis,
 Ane wes ane wedow I wist, wantoun of laitis.
 And as thair talkit at the tabill of mony taill funde
 Thay wauchtit at the wicht wyne, and warit out wourdis,
 And syne thair spak more spedelie, and sparit no materis.

The "materis" treated of in this long conversation are the opinions of the three ladies upon the obligations of marriage. The sentiments uttered are of the most profligate sort, one of the wives expressing her wishes thus :

Chenyeis ay ar to eschew, and changeis ar sueit.
 Sic cursit chance till eschew had I my chois anis
 Out of the chenyeis of ane churle I chaip suld for euir.
 God gif matrimony were made to mell for ane yeir !
 It war bot monstrous to be mair bot gif our myndis pleisit.

Dunbar's idea of womanhood touches its nadir in this poem, and the effect is the more unwholesome from the fact that the most licentious and sensual imaginings are put into the mouths, not of degraded women, but of the most lovely and modest-seeming of the sex.

But it is when he leaves the initiative of others

behind and enters a realm of his own that Dunbar's powers are seen in their full strength and exuberance. "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis" is the most powerful of all his works. No such daring grotesquerie ever was painted, before or since, for a carnival riot on the eve of Lent. In "Tam o' Shanter" there is a familiar touch which softens the horrible, and Goethe's "Walpurgis Night" has a mournful human under-strain; but here the picture is unrelieved; an iron curtain seems pushed aside, and a moment's bewildering glimpse is caught of the actual lurid turmoil of hell. The poem is realistic and fearfully vivid in its details, and in the days when it was written must have appeared to its readers as horrible as it is startling.

In the same lower region the poet set the scene of another grotesque production, "The Turnament," a contest between a tailor and souter, or shoemaker. This and the long and somewhat obscure "Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy" furnish specimens of such extravagant scurrility and dirt, without containing anything morally impure, as it would be difficult to match out of Rabelais. It is curious to think that the "Flyting," with all its villanous abuse, was probably nothing more than a friendly tilting match between two famous free-lances. Irving notes the fact that a similar abusive contest was carried on in the time of Lorenzo de Medici by Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco, who were nevertheless close friends, and that in our country the example of Dunbar and Kennedy was followed by James V.

and Sir David Lindsay, and by Montgomery and Hume. Formal rules, indeed, for such encounters were laid down by James VI. in his *Art of Poesie*. The elaborate "Flyting," nevertheless, it is to be feared, is apt to prove somewhat wearisome reading now-a-days. The "Turnament," on the other hand, with its wild, if coarse, fun, would appear to have excited the ire of members of the crafts burlesqued, and under the guise of an apology to the offended guildsmen the poet wrote an "Amendis," which is one of the most salt of his satires.

It was personal feeling, however, which gave their bitterest tang to many of the satires of Dunbar. Two of these concern a certain Italian impostor, one John Damian from Lombardy, who, on the strength of a professed ability to convert the baser metals into gold, effected a footing as physician and alchemist at the court of James IV., and in 1504 was made Abbot of Tungland in Galloway. Three years later, according to Bishop Lesley,* having failed to produce the promised gold, Damian, to maintain his reputation, gave out that he would fly from the walls of Stirling Castle to France. This he actually attempted, and on the appointed day, furnished with a huge pair of wings, he plunged from the castle rampart; but instead of flying through the heavens he fell to the ground beneath and broke his thigh-bone. Such a subject was not to be missed by the satirist, affording, as it did, a contrast between the high preferment bestowed on quackery and the neglect to which modest merit was

* The historian of James the Fourth's reign.

relegated. In "The Fenyeit Freir of Tungland" the poet has made the most of the episode. It is "a rare specimen of burlesque spiced with gay malice."

In many poems Dunbar did not hesitate to set forth his grievance in plain words to the king, coming in several cases as near to the accent of reproach as was politic in addressing a sovereign. Sometimes these appeals for promotion are almost pathetic in their expression of the sickness that comes of hope deferred; sometimes, though less frequently, they are couched in a humorous form, as in "The Petition of the Gray Horse." They give here and there a pitiful revelation of the poet in his need, improvident while his means last, watching with a sigh the constant preferment of duller souls, while age creeps fast upon him, and the hunger of his heart remains unsatisfied.

In one considerable class of his poems, as has been said, a moral and philosophical vein is touched, and it is supposed that these were chiefly written in his latter days. Some of them, such as "Best to be Blyth" and "Meditatioun in Wynter," take a cheerful turn, but, like the personal petitions addressed to the king, most are tinged with the shade of melancholy. All, however, show a deep appreciation of the peculiarities of human nature, and an accurate gauging of the secret springs of human motives, foibles, and passions. "The Lament for the Makaris" is the best known of these moral poems, and is, besides, a specimen of the sort of macaronic verse, the fantastic mixture of tongues, which was then a poetic fashion. The reflections of the poem are simple, and its tone

uniformly sad. Youth and loveliness, bravery and wit, all come to an end, and even the poets, for all their sweet service, cannot escape the hand of death. As a historical document, a record of the names of early Scottish singers, this composition has been of the greatest value; but it is something more than this; it is a noble elegy on the illustrious dead, sung by lips that have thirsted and found life bitter.

Of Dunbar's work and character as a whole numerous estimates have been made. Merry Ross appears inclined to consider as his highest quality "a certain unique intensity of feeling," the expression of that "passionate or indomitable force, even tending to extravagance and one-sided zeal, which distinguishes and differentiates the people of the north from their southern neighbours, and is particularly conspicuous in all their foremost men."* Scott did not hesitate to set Dunbar in several respects upon a level with Chaucer. "In brilliancy of fancy," he declares, "in force of description, in the power of conveying moral precepts with terseness, and marking lessons of life with conciseness and energy, in quickness of satire and in poignancy of humour, the Northern Makar may boldly aspire to rival the Bard of Woodstock."† On the makar's vital shortcoming, on the other hand, the critics seem agreed. Brilliant beyond any of the poet company he sang, Dunbar still lacked one thing to set him in the ranks of the greatest of the immortals. That place is reserved for those

* *Scottish History and Literature*, p. 215.

† *Memoirs of George Bannatyne*, 1829, p. 14.

alone who, supreme in other gifts, possess also the key to the fountain of tears. Humour the wildest, wit the keenest, imagination the richest and most glowing, illumine his page; but nowhere, except lightly in "The Lament for the Makaris," and in one little love poem perhaps, does he stir the deeper currents of the heart. No storm of tragic passion or tenderness sweeps through his verse, the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, the toils and hardships of common life were nothing to him. The gentler part of existence was shut from him, with the pure ministry of womanhood, by his priestly vows, and while lord alike of beauty and terror, of bewitching fantasies and mocking laughter, he leaves one side of life, and that the truest, entirely untouched. His work reflects the ideals and life of Scotland at a time when the old world with its faith was passing away. Nothing of the warm breath and promise of a spring-time is to be found in his pages. His gorgeous colour and splendid imaginings are like the glories of the autumn forest, the fires in the withering leaf.

In the spirit of his time is to be found at once the keynote and the shortcoming of Dunbar's life and poetry. In an atmosphere of nobler aspiration his genius might have burned with a purer flame. As it is, he holds a great place, second only to that of Robert Burns, in the gallery of Scottish poets.

THE GOLDYN TARGE.

RYGHȚ as the stern of day begouth to schyne,
 Quhen gone to bed war Vesper and Lucyne,
 I raise and by a rosere¹ did me rest; ¹ rose-tree.

Wp sprang the goldyn candill matutyne
 With clere depurit bemes cristallyne,
 Glading the mirry foulis in thair nest;
 Or² Phebus was in purpur kaip revest ² ere.
 Wp sprang the lark, the hevinis menstrale fyne,
 In May, in-till a morow³ myrthfullest. ³ morning.

Full angellike thir birdis sang thair houris⁴ ⁴ morning
 Within thair courtyns⁵ grene in-to thair bouris, ⁵ prayers.
 Apparalit quhyte and red, wyth blumys suete;
 Anamalit was the felde wyth all colouris, ⁵ gardens.
 The perly droppis schuke in silvir schouris,
 Quhill all in balme did branch and levis flete⁶; ⁶ float.
 Depairt fra Phebus, did Aurora grete⁷, ⁷ weep.
 Hir cristall teris I saw hyng on the flouris,
 Quhilk he for lufe all drank vp with his hete.

For mirth of May, wyth skippis and wyth hoppis,
 The birdis sang vpon the tender croppis⁸ ⁸ tree tops.
 With courius note, as Venus chapell clerkis:
 The rosis reid, now spreiding of thair knoppis⁹, ⁹ knobs, tufts.

- ¹ beryl. War powderit brycht with hevinly beriall¹ droppis,
Throu bemes rede birnyng as ruby sperkis;
The skyes rang for schoutyng of the larkis,
² over-spilled. The purpur hevyn our-scaillit² in silvir sloppis,
Our-gilt the treis, branchis, leivis and barkis.
- ³ brushwood. Doun thrwch ryss³ ane ryuir ran wyth stremys,
⁴ pleasantly. So lustily⁴ agayn thai lykand lemys⁵
⁵ likened flames. That all the lake as lamp did leme of licht,
Quhilk schadovit all about wyth twynkling glemis,
⁶ branches. That bewis⁶ bathit war in secund bemys
Throu the reflex of Phebus visage brycht.
⁷ on high. On every syde the hegeis raise on hicht⁷,
The bank was grene, the bruke vas full of bremys,
⁸ gravel. The stanneris⁸ clere as stern in frosty nycht.

- The cristall air, the sapher firmament,
The ruby skyes of the orient,
Kest beriall bemes on emerant bewis grene;
⁹ garden. The rosy garth⁹, depaynt and redolent
¹⁰ rose-red, delicate. With purpur, azure, gold, and goulis gent¹⁰,
Arayed was by dame Fflora the quene
¹¹ to see. So nobily that ioy was for to sene¹¹:
¹² rock. The roch¹² agayn the rywir resplendent
¹³ shining. As low¹³ enlumynit all the leues schene¹⁴.

Quhat throu the mery foullys armony,
And throu the ryueris sounn that ran me by,
On Fflorais mantill I slepit quhair I lay,
Quhare sone in-to my dremes fantasy

I saw approch agayn the orient sky
 Ane saill als quhite as blossom vpon spray,
 Wyth mast of gold, brycht as the stern of day,
 Quhilk tendit to the land full lustily,
 As falcoun swift desyrrouse of hir pray.

And hard on burd¹ vnto the blomyt medis,
 Amangis the grene rispis² and the redis,
 Arrivit scho; quhar-fro anone thare landis
 Ane hundreth ladyes, lusty in-till wedis,
 Als fresch as flouris that in the May vp spredis,
 In kirtillis grene, withoutyn kell³ or bandis⁴;
 Thair brycht hairis hang gletering on the strandis
 In tressis clere, wyppit⁵ wyth goldyn thredis,
 With pappis quhite, and middillis small as wandis.

¹ ground.² coarse grasses.³ caul, cap.⁴ neckerchiefs.⁵ bound round.

Discriue I wald, bot quho cowth wele endyte
 How all the feldis wyth thai lilies quhite
 Depaynt war brycht, quhilk to the hevin did glete⁶? ⁶ gleam.
 Noucht thou, Homer, als fair as thou cowth wryte,
 For all thi ornate stylë so perfyte,
 Nor yit thou, Tullius, quhois lippis suete
 Off rethorike did in-to termis flete⁷:
 Your aureate tongis both bene all to lyte⁸
 For to compile that paradise complete.

⁷ float.⁸ too little.

Thare saw I Nature, and [dame] Venus quene,
 The fresch Aurora, and lady Flora schene⁹,
 Iuno, [Latona,] and Proserpyna,
 Dyane, the goddesse chaste of woddis grene,

⁹ beautiful.

* help of poets is. My lady Cleo that help of makaris bene¹,
 Thetes, Pallas, and prudent Minerua,
² feigned. Fair feynit² Fortune, and lemand³ Lucina
³ shining. Thir mychti quenis in crounis mycht be sene,
 Wyth bemys blith, bricht as Lucifera.

There saw I May, of myrthfull monethis quene,
 Betuix Aprile and June, her sisteris schene,
 Within the gairdene walking vp and down,
⁴ rejoice sud- Quham of the foulis gladdith al bedene⁴;
 denly. Scho was full tender in-till hir yeris grene.
 There saw I Nature present hir a goune
 Rich to behald and nobil of renoune,
 Off ewiry hew that vnder the hevin hes bene
 Depaynt, and braid be gude proporcioun.

⁵ company. Full lustily thir ladyes all in fere⁵
 Enterit within this park of most plesere,
⁶ covered with Quhare that I lay helit wyth leuis ronk⁶;
 rank leaves. The mery foulis, blisfullest of chere,
⁷ Saluted. Salust⁷ Nature, me-thocht, in thair manere,
 And ewiry blome on branch and eke on bonk
 Opnyt and spred thair balmy leuis donk,
 Full low enclynynge to thair Quene full clere,
 Quham of thair nobill nvrissing thay thonk.

⁸ Afterwards. Syne⁸ to dame Flora on the samyn wyse
⁹ times. Thay saluse and thay thank a thousand syse⁹,
 And to dame Wenus, lufis mychti quene,
¹⁰ guise, fashion. Thay sang ballattis in lufe, as was the gyse¹⁰,

With amoureuse notis most lusty to devise,
 As thay that had lufe in thair hertis grene;
 Thair hony throtis, opnyt fro the splene¹, 1 from the heart.
 With warbillis suete did perse the hevinly skyes,
 Quhill loud resownyt the firmament serene.

Ane-othir court thare saw I subsequent;
 Cupide the king, wyth bow in hand ay bent
 And dredefull arowis grundyn scharp and square;
 Thare saw I Mars, the god armypotent,
 Aufull and sterne, strong and corpulent;
 Thare saw I crabbit Saturn ald and haire², 2 hoar.
 His luke was lyke for to perturb the aire;
 Thare was Marcourius, wise and eloquent,
 Of rhetorike that fand³ the flouris faire. 3 found.

Thare was the god of gardynis, Priapus;
 Thare was the god of wildernes, Phanus;
 And Ianus, god of entres⁴ delytable; 4 entries.
 Thare was the god of fludis, Neptunus;
 Thare was the god of windis, Eolus,
 With variand luke; rycht lyke a lord vnstable;
 Thare was Bachus, the gladder of the table;
 Thare was Pluto, the elrich⁵ incubus, 5 uncanny,
elvish.
 In cloke of grene, his court usit no sable.

And ewiry one of thir⁶, in grene arayit, 6 these.
 On harp or lute full merily thai playit,
 And sang ballettis with mighty notis clere.
 Ladyes to dance full sobirly assayit,

- ¹ Along. Endlang¹ the lusty rywir so thai mayit ;
 Thair obseruance rycht hevynly was to here.
 Than crap I throu the leuis and drew nere,
 Quhare that I was richt sudaynly affrayit
² bought. All throu a luke quhilk I haue coft² full dere.

- And schortly for to speke, of lufis quene
 I was aspyit. Scho bad hir archearis kene
 Go me arrest ; and thay no time delayit.
 Than ladyes fair lete fall thair mantillis grene,
 With bowis big in tressit hairis schene.
 All sudaynly thay had a felde arayit ;
 And yit rycht gretly was I noucht affrayit,
³ to see. The party was so plesand for to sene³.
⁴ A wonderfully A wonder lusty bikar⁴ me assayit.
 pleasant strife.

- And first of all, with bow in hand ay bent,
⁵ confound, Come dame Bewty rycht as scho wald me schent⁵;
 destroy.
⁶ company. Syne folowit all hir dammosallis in feir⁶,
 With mony diuerse aufull instrument,
 Wnto the pres ; Fair Having wyth hir went,
 Fyne Portrature, Plesance, and lusty Chere.
 Than come Resoun, with schelde of gold so clere..
 In plate and maille, as Mars armypotent,
 Defendit me that nobil cheuallere.

Syne tender Youth come wyth hir virgenis ying
 Grene Innocence, and schamefull Abaising,
 And quaking Drede, wyth humyll Obedience.
 The Goldyn Targe harmyt thay no-thing ;

Curage in thame was noucht begonne to spring;
 Full sore thay dred to done a violence.
 Sute Womanhede I saw cum in presence;
 Of artilye¹ a world sche did in bring, ¹ artillery.
 Seruit wyth ladyes full of reuerence.

Scho led with hir Nurture and Lawlyness,
 Continwance², Pacience, Gude Fame, and Stedfastnes, ² Continence.
 Discretioun, Gentrise³, and Considerance, ³ Gentlehood.
 Lefull⁴ Company and Honest Besynes ⁴ Lawful.
 Benigne Luke, Mylde Chere, and Sobirnes.
 All thir bure ganyeys⁵ to do me greuance, ⁵ darts.
 But Resoun bure the Targe wyth sik⁶ constance ⁶ such.
 Thair scharp assayes mycht do no dures
 To me for all thair afull ordynance.

Wnto the pres persewit Hie Degre;
 Hir folowit ay Estate and Dignitee,
 Comparisoun, Honour, and Noble Array,
 Will, Wantonness, Renoun, and Libertee,
 Richesse, Fredome, and eke Nobilitee.
 Wit ye thay did thair baner hye display;
 A cloud of arowis as hayle-schour lousit thay
 And schot, quhill⁷ wastit was thair artilye, ⁷ till.
 Syne went abak rebutit⁸ of thair pray. ⁸ repulsed.

Quhen Venus had persauit this rebute,
 Dissymilance scho bad go mak persute,
 At all powere to perse the Goldyn Targe;
 And scho that was of doubilnes the rute

¹ means of achievement. Askit hir choise of archeris in refute¹.
² choose. Wenus the best bad hir to wale² at large;
³ pledge. Scho tuke Presence plicht³ anker of the barge,
⁴ an arrow. And Fair Callyng that wele a flayn⁴ coud schute,
 And Cherising for to complete hir charge.

Dame Hamelyne's scho tuke in company,
⁵ skilful. That hardy was, and hende⁵ in archery,
 And brocht dame Bewty to the felde agayn.
 With all the choise of Venus cheualry
⁶ made assault. Thay come, and bikkerit⁶ vnabaisitly.
 The schour of arowis rappit on as rayn;
⁷ "syouris," Perrellus Presence, that mony syre⁷ has slayne,
⁸ took place on the beach. The bataill broucht on bordour⁸ hard me by;
⁹ sorer, truth to say. The salt was all the sarar, suth to sayn⁹.

Thik was the schote of grundyn dartis kene;
 Bot Resoun with the Scheld of Gold so schene
¹⁰ In warlike fashion. Weirly¹⁰ defendit, quho-so-ewir assayit.
¹¹ storm. The afull stoure¹¹ he manly did sustene,
 Quhill Presence kest a pulder in his ene,
¹² went astray. And than as drunkyn man he all forvayit¹².
 Quhen he was blynd the fule wyth hym thay playit,
 And banyst hym amang the bewis grene.
 That sair sicht me sudaynly affrayit.

Than was I woundit till the deth wele nere
 And yoldyn as a wofull prisonnere
 To lady Bewty in a moment space.
 Me-thocht scho semyt lustiar of chere

Efter that Resoun had tynt¹ his eyne clere ¹ lost.
 Than of before, and lufiare of face.
 Quhy was thou blyndit, Resoun? quhi, allace!
 And gert² ane hell my paradise appere, ² caused.
 And mercy seme, quhare that I fand no grace.

Dissymulance was besy me to sile³ ³ blindfold.
 And Fair Calling did oft vpoun me smyle
 And Cherising me fed wyth wordis fair;
 New Acquyntance enbracit me a quhile,
 And fauouryt me quhill men mycht ga ane myle,
 Syne tuk hir leif; I saw hir nevir mare.
 Than saw I Dangere toward me repair;
 I couth eschew hir presence be no wyle;
 On syde scho lukit wyth ane fremyt fare⁴. ⁴ foreign
(unfriendly)
bearing.

And at the last Departing cowth hir dresse⁵, ⁵ Separation
began her
treatment.
 And me delyuerit vnto Hevynesse
 For to remayne, and scho in cure⁶ me tuke. ⁶ care.
 Be this the Lord of Wyndis, wyth wodenes⁷, ⁷ fury, madness.
 God Eolus, his bugill blew I gesse,
 That with the blast the leuis all to schuke,
 And sudaynly, in the space of ane luke,
 All was hyne⁸ went, thare was bot wildernes, ⁸ hence.
 Thare was no more bot birdis, bank, and bruke.

In twynkling of ane e to schip thai went,
 And swyth⁹ vp saile vnto the top thai stent¹⁰, ⁹ swiftly.
¹⁰ stretched.
 And with swift course atour¹¹ the flude thay frak¹². ¹¹ over.
¹² sped.
 Thay fyrir gunnis wyth polder violent,

¹ smoke. Till that the reke¹ raise to the firmament;
² crash. The rockes all resoundit wyth the rak²;
³ noise. For reird³ it semyt that the raynbow brak.
⁴ sprang. Wyth spreit affrayit apon my fete I sprent⁴,
⁵ cliffs, ravines. Amang the clewis⁵ so carefull was the crak.

⁶ awake from my dreaming. And as I did awalk of my sueving⁶
 The ioyfull birdis merily did syng
 For myrth of Phebus tendir bemes schene;
⁷ morning. Suete war the vapouris, soft the morowing⁷,
 Halesum the vale, depaynt wyth flouris ying;
 The air attemperit, sobir, and amene;
⁸ furnished forth. In quhite and rede was all the felde besene⁸,
 Throu Naturis nobil fresche anamalyng,
 In mirthfull May of ewiry moneth quene.

O reuerend Chaucere, rose of rhethoris all,
 As in our tong ane flour imperiall,
 That raise in Britane ewir, quho redis rycht,
 Thou beris of makaris the tryumph riall;
⁹ celestial. Thy fresch anamalit termes celicall⁹
 This mater coud illumynit haue full brycht.
 Was thou noucht of oure Inglis all the lycht,
 Surmounting ewiry tong terrestriall,
 Alls fer as Mayes morow dois mydnycht?

O morall Gower, and Ludgate laureate,
 Your sugurit lippis and totingis aureate
 Bene to oure eris cause of grete delyte.
 Your angelik mouthis most mellifluate

Our rude langage has clere illumynate,
 And faire our-gilt oure speche, that imperfyte
 Stude or¹ your goldyn pennis schupe² to wryte. ¹ ere.
 This Ile before was bare and desolate ² prepared.
 Of rethorike, or lusty fresch endyte.

Thou lytill Quair, be ewir obedient,
 Humble, subiect, and symple of entent
 Befōre the face of ewiry connyng³ wicht, ³ skilful.
 I know quhat thou of rethorike hes spent.
 Off all hir lusty rosis redolent
 Is none in-to thy gerland sett on hicht⁴, ⁴ on high.
 Eschame thairfoir, and draw thé out of sicht,
 Rude is thy wede, destitute, bare, and rent,
 Wele aucht thou be affeirit⁵ of the licht. ⁵ afraid.

THE THRISSIL AND THE ROIS.

QUHEN Merche wes with variand windis past,
And Appryll had, with hir siluer schouris,
Tane leif at Nature with ane orient blast,
And lusty¹ May, that mvddir is of flouris,
Had maid the birdis to begyn thair houris²
Amang the tendir odouris reid and quhyt,
Quhois armony to heir it wes delyt ;

¹ pleasant.

² morning
prayers.

In bed at morrow, sleiping as I lay,
Me-thocht Aurora with hir cristall ene
In at the window lukit by the day,
And halsit³ me, with visage paill and grene ;
On quhois hand a lark sang fro the splene⁴,
“Awalk, luvaris, out of your slomerin !
Se how the lusty morrow dois vp spring.”

³ greeted.

⁴ from the heart.

Me-thocht fresche May befor my bed vpstude,
In weid depaynt of mony diuerss hew,
Sobir, benyng, and full of mansuetude⁵,
In brycht attair of flouris forgit new,
Hevinly of color, quhyt, reid, broun, and blew,
Balmit in dew, and gilt with Phebus bemys,
Quhill all the house illumynit of hir lemys⁶.

⁵ meekness.

⁶ glowing.

“Slugird,” scho said, “awalk¹ annone for schame, ¹ awake.

And in my honour sum-thing thou go wryt;
The lark hes done the mirry day proclame,
To raise vp luvaris with confort and delyt;
Yit nocht incessis thy curage to indyt,
Quhois hairt sum-tyme hes glaid and blisfull bene,
Sangis to mak vndir the levis grene.”

“Quhairto,” quod I, “sall I vpryse at morrow,
For in this May few birdis herd I sing?
Thai haif moir cause to weip and plane thair sorrow;
Thy air it is nocht holsum nor benyng;
Lord Eolus dois in thy sessone ring²;
So busteous³ ar the blastis of his horne,
Amang thy bewis⁴ to walk I haif forborne.”

² reigns in thy season.
³ rude, powerful.
⁴ boughs.

With that this lady sobirly did smyle,
And said, “Vpryse, and do thy observance;
Thow did promyt, in Mayis lusty quhyle,
For to discryve⁵ the Rois of most plesance.
Go se the birdis how thay sing and dance,
Illumynit our⁶ with orient skyis brycht,
Annamyllit richely with new asur lycht.”

⁵ describe.
⁶ over.

Quhen this wes said, depairtit scho, this quene,
And enterit in a lusty gairding gent⁷;
And than, me-thocht, full hestely besene⁸,
In serk and mantill [eftir hir] I went
In-to this garth⁹, most dulce and redolent
Off herb and flour and tendir plantis suet,
And grene levis doing of dew down fleit¹⁰.

⁷ neat (genteel).
⁸ fitted out.
⁹ inclosure.
¹⁰ causing dew to float down.

¹ The purple sun. The purpour sone¹, with tendir bemys reid,
 In orient bricht as angell did appeir.
 Throw goldin skyis putting vp his heid,
 Quhois gilt tressis schone so wondir cleir,
 That all the world tuke confort, fer and neir,
 To luke vpone his fresche and blisfull face,
 Doing all sable fro the hevynnis chace.

² the blissful
 sound of the
 angel choir. And as the blisfull sonne of cherarchy²
 The fowlis song throw confort of the licht;
 The birdis did with oppin vocis cry,
 "O, luvaris fo, away thou dully Nycht!
 And welcum, Day, that confortis every wicht!
³ shining,
 beautiful. Haill May, haill Flora, haill Aurora schene³,
 Haill princes Natur, haill Venus, luvis quene!"

Dame Nature gaif ane inhibitioun thair
 To ferss Neptunus and Eolus the bawld,
 Nocht to perturb the wattir nor the air,
 And that no schouris [snell] nor blastis cawld
⁴ earth. Effray suld flouris nor fowlis on the fold⁴.
⁵ also. Scho bad eik⁵ Juno, goddis of the sky,
 That scho the hevin suld keip amene and dry.

Scho ordand eik that every bird and beist
 Befoir hir hienes suld annone compeir,
 And every flour of vertew, most and leist,
 And every herb be feild fer and neir,
 As thay had wont in May fro yeir to yeir,
 To hir thair makar to mak obediens,
 Full law inclynnand with all dew reuerens.

With that annone scho send the swyft Ro
 To bring in beistis of all conditioun;
 The restles Suallow commandit scho also
 To feche all fowll of small and greit renown;
 And to gar¹ flouris compeir of all fassoun ¹ cause.
 Full craftely conjurit scho the Yarrow,
 Quhilk did furth swirk² als swift as ony arrow. ² dart.

All present wer in twynkling of ane e,
 Baith beist and bird and flour, befor the quene.
 And first the Lyone, gretast of degre,
 Was callit thair; and he, most fair to sene³, ³ to see.
 With a full hardy contenance and kene,
 Befor dame Natur come, and did inclyne,
 With visage bawld and curage leonyne.

This awfull beist full terrible wes of cheir,
 Persing of luke, and stout of countenance,
 Rycht strong of corpis, of fassoun fair, but feir⁴, ⁴ without companion.
 Lusty of schaip, lycht of deliuerance⁵; ⁵ movement.
 Reid of his cullour, as is the ruby glance,
 On feild of gold he stude full mychtely,
 With flour-de-lycis sirculit lustely.*

This Lady liftit vp his cluvis⁶ cleir, ⁶ claws
 And leit him listly⁷ lene vpone hir kne, ⁷ willingly.
 And crownit him with dyademe full deir,
 Off radyous stonis, most ryall for to se,
 Saying, "The King of Beistis mak I thé,
 And the cheif protector in woddis and schawis⁸; ⁸ coverts.
 Onto thi leigis go furth and keip the lawis.

* A description of the royal arms of Scotland.

“Exerce justice with mercy and conscience,
¹ hurt nor contumely. And lat no small beist suffir skaith na skornis¹
 Of greit beistis that bene of moir piscence ;
² Make law alike. Do law elyk² to aipis and vnicornis,
 And lat no bowgle with his busteous hornis
 The meik pluch-ox oppress, for all his pryd,
 Bot in the yok go peciable him besyd.”

Quhen this was said, with noyis and soun of joy,
 All kynd of beistis in-to thair degre,
 At onis cryit lawd, “Viue le Roy !”
 And till his feit fell with humilite,
³ fealty. And all thay maid him homege and fewte³;
⁴ gestures. And he did thame ressaif with princely laitis⁴,
⁵ perhaps “does spare the prostrate.” Quhois noble yre is proceir prostratis⁵.

Syne crownit scho the Egle King of Fowlis,
⁶ quills. And as steill dertis scherpit scho his pennis⁶,
 And bawd him be als just to awppis and owlis,
⁷ parrots. As vnto pacokkis, papingais⁷, or crennis,
⁸ mighty. And mak a law for wycht⁸ fowlis and for wrennis ;
⁹ do affrighting. And lat no fowll of ravyne do efferay⁹,
 Nor devoir birdis bot his awin pray.

Than callit scho all flouris that grew on feild,
¹⁰ qualities. Discirnyng all thair fassionis and effeiris¹⁰.
 Vpone the awfull Thrissill scho beheld,
 And saw him kepit with a busche of speiris ;
 Concedring him so able for the weiris,
 A radius croun of rubeis scho him gaif,
¹¹ protect the rest. And said, “In feild go furth, and fend the laif”;

"And, sen¹ thow art a king, thou be discreit ; ¹ since.

Herb without vertew thou hald nocht of sic² pryce ² such.

As herb of vertew and of odor sueit ;

And lat no nettill vyle and full of vyce,

Hir fallow³ to the gudly flour-de-lyce ; ³ fellow herself.

Nor latt no wyld weid, full of churlicheness,

Compair hir till the lilleis nobilness.

"Nor hald non vdir flour in sic denty⁴ ⁴ in such regard.

As the fresche Rois, of cullour reid and quhyt ;*

For gife thow dois, hurt is thyne honesty,

Conciddering that no flour is so perfyte,

So full of vertew, plesans, and delyt,

So full of blisfull angeilik bewty,

Imperiall birth, honour, and dignite."

Than to the Rois scho turnyt hir visage,

And said, "O lusty dochtir most benyng,

Aboif the lilly illustare of lynnage,†

Fro the stok ryell rysing fresche and ying,

But ony spot or macull doing spring⁵ ; ⁵ Springing with-
out spot or stain.

Cum, blowme of joy, with jemis to be cround,

For our the laif⁶ thy bewty is renowned." ⁶ over the rest.

A coistly croun, with clarefeid stonis brycht,

This cumly quene did on hir heid inclois,

Quhill all the land illumynit of the licht ;

Quhairfoir me-thocht all flouris did reiois,

Crying attonis⁷, "Haill be thou, richest Rois ! ⁷ at once.

Haill, hairbis empyce ! haill freschest quene of flouris !

To thé be glory and honour at all houris !"

* An allusion, as Laing pointed out, to the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster, the Red and White Roses, in the persons of Henry VII. and his queen.

† An allusion to the earlier effort to unite James IV. to a daughter of the House of Valois.

Thane all the birdis song with voce on hicht,
 Quhois mirthfull soun wes mervelus to heir.
 * thrush. The mavyis¹ song, "Haill, Rois most riche and richt,
 That dois vp flureiss vndir Phebus speir!
 Haill, plant of yowth, haill, princes dochtir deir,
 Haill, blosome, breking out of the blud royall,
 Quhois pretius vertew is imperiall!"

The merle scho sang, "Haill, Rois of most delyt,
 Haill, of all flouris quene and souerane!"
 The lark scho song, "Haill, Rois, both reid and
 quhyt,
 Most plesand flour, of mighty cullouris twane!"
 The nyctingail song, "Haill, Naturis suffragane,
 In bewty, nurtour, and every nobilness,
 In riche array, renown and gentilness!"

The commoun voce vp raise of birdis small,
 Apone this wyis, "O blissit be the hour
 That thow wes chosin to be our principall!
 Welcome to be our princes of honour,
 Our perle, our plesans, and our paramour,
 2 peace. Our peax², our play, our plane felicite,
 Chryst thé conserf frome all aduersite!"

Than all the birdis song with sic a schout,
 That I annone awoilk quhair that I lay,
 3 cry. And with a braid³ I turnyt me about
 To se this court; bot all were went away.
 4 partly in affright. Than vp I lenyt, halfingis in affrey⁴,
 5 before. And thus I wret, as ye haiff hard to-forrow⁵,
 Off lusty May vpone the nynt morrow.

BEWTY AND THE PRESONEIR.*

SEN that I am a presoneir
Till hir that fairest is and best,
I me commend, fra yeir till yeir,
In-till hir bandoun¹ for to rest.
I govit² on that gudliest,
So lang to luk I tuk laseir,
Quhill I wes tane withouttin test³,
And led furth as a presoneir.

¹ service.

² gazed eagerly.

³ contest.

Hir sweit having and fresche bewtie
Hes wondit me but⁴ swerd or lance,
With hir to go commandit me
Ontill the castell of Pennance.
I said "Is this your gouirnance,
To tak men for thair lukiing heir?"
Fresche Bewty said "Ya, schir, perchance,
Ye be my ladeis presoneir."

⁴ without.

Thai had me bundin to the yet⁵
Quhair Strangeness had bene portar ay,
And in deliuerit me thairat,
And in thair⁶ termis can thai say,

⁵ They conveyed
me to the gate.

⁶ these.

* Laing suggests that in this poem Dunbar may have done little more than delineate one of the pageants or masques of the period which he had witnessed while in England.

¹ Give attention.

"Do wait¹, and lat him nocht away."
 Quo Strangnes vnto the porteur
 "Ontill my lady, I dar lay,
 Ye be to pure a presoneir."

² named.

³ disdain.

⁴ Though I was
 woful I dared
 not complain.

⁵ qualities
 (senses).

⁶ did I say.

Thai kest me in a deip dungeoun,
 And fetterit me but lok or cheyne.
 The capitane hecht² Comparesone,
 To luke on me he thocht greit deyne³.
 Thocht I wes wo I durst nocht playne⁴,
 For he had fetterit mony affeir⁵;
 With petouss voce thus cuth I sene⁶
 "Wo is a wofull presoneir!"

⁷ watch.

⁸ jester.

⁹ bauble.

¹⁰ comes within
 bounds.

¹¹ clownish(?)

Langour wes weche⁷ vpoun the wall,
 That nevir sleipit, bot evir wouke;
 Scorne wes bourdour⁸ in the hall;
 And oft on me his babill⁹ schuke,
 Lukand with mony a dengerous luke;
 "Quhat is he yone, that methis¹⁰ ws neir?
 Ye be to townage¹¹, be this buke,
 To be my ladeis presoneir."

¹² whispered.

¹³ write.

¹⁴ sped without
 companion.

¹⁵ secret words.

Gud Houp rownit¹² in my eir,
 And bad me baldlie breve¹³ a bill;
 With Lawlines he suld it beir,
 With Fair Scherwice send it hir till.
 I wouk and wret hir all my will;
 Fair Scherwice fur withouttin feir¹⁴,
 Sayand till hir with wirdis still¹⁵,
 "Haif pety of your presoneir!"

Than Lawlines to Petie went,
 And said till hir in termis schort,
 "Lat we yone presoneir be schent¹,
 Will no man do to ws support;
 Gar² lay ane sege vnto yone fort."
 Than Petie said, "I sall appeir;"
 Thocht sayis, "I hecht, com I ourthort³,
 I houp to lowss the presoneir."

¹ undone.² Cause.³ I promise, if I come over.

Than to battell thai war arreyit all,
 And ay the wawart⁴ kepit Thocht;
 Lust bur the benner to the wall,
 And Bissines the grit gyn brocht⁵.
 Skorne cryis out, sayis, "Wald ye ocht?"
 Lust sayis, "We wald haif entre heir;"
 Comparisone sayis, "That is for nocht;
 Ye will nocht wyn the presoneir."

⁴ vanguard.⁵ brought the great engine of war.

Thai thairin schup⁶ for to defend,
 And thai thairfurth sailyeit⁷ ane hour;
 Than Bissiness the grit gyn bend,
 Straik down the top of the foir tour.
 Comparisone began to lour⁸,
 And cryit furth, "I yow requeir,
 Soft and fair and do fawour,
 And tak to yow the presoneir."

⁶ prepared.⁷ assailed.⁸ look gloomy.

Thai fyrit the yettis deliuerly⁹
 With faggottis wer grit and huge;
 And Strangenes, quhair that he did ly
 Wes brint in-to the porter luge.

⁹ gates speedily.

- ¹ Such strokes
and rustling
were astir.

Lustely thay lakit bot a juge,
Sic straikis and stychling wes on steir¹,
The semeliest wes maid assege
To quhome that he wes presoneir.

- ² Through
Scorn's nose.
³ blacking.
⁴ buried alive.

Thrucht Skornes noss² thai put a prik,
This he wes banist and gat a blek³;
Comparisone wes erdit quik⁴,
And Langour lap and brak his nek.
Thai sailyeit fast, all the fek⁵;
Lust chasit my ladeis chalmirleir⁶;
Gud Fame wes drownit in a sek.
Thus ransonit thai the presoneir.

- ⁷ From the time
when Slander
heard.

- ⁸ Gathered to
battle.

- ⁹ cousin.

- ¹⁰ gossip-
mongers.

- ¹¹ conceals.

Fra Sklandir hard⁷ Lust had vndone
His enemeis, him aganis
Assemblit⁸ ane semely sort full sone,
And raiss and rowttit all the planis.
His cusing⁹ in the court remanis,
Bot jalouss folkis and geangleiris¹⁰
And fals Invy that no-thing lanis¹¹
Blew out on Luvis presoneir.

- ¹² armed, without
lying, *i.e.* in
fact.

- ¹³ doubt, uncer-
tainty.

Syne Matremony, that nobill king,
Was grevit, and gadderit ane grit ost,
And all enermitt, without lesing¹²,
Chest Sklander to the west se cost.
Than wes he and his linege lost,
And Matremony, withouttin weir¹³,
The band of freindschip hes indost
Betuix Bewty and the presoneir.

Be that of eild¹ wes Gud Famiss air,
And cumyne to continwatioun,
And to the court maid his repair,
Quhair Matremony than woir the crowne.
He gat ane confirmatioun
All that his modir aucht but weir²,
And baid³ still, as it wes resone,
With Bewty and the presoneir.

¹ By that time
Good Fame's
heir was of age.

² owned assur-
edly.

³ abode.

LONDON.*

LONDON, thou art of townes A per se!
Soveraign of cities, semeliest in sight,
Of high renoun, riches, and royaltie;
Of lordis, barons, and many goodly knight;
Of most delectable lusty ladies bright;
Of famous prelatis in habitis clericall;
Of merchauntis full of substaunce and myght:
London, thou art the flour of cities all!

¹ Be glad.
² pleasant.
³ named.

Gladdith¹ anon thou lusty² Troynovaunt,
City that some-tyme cleped³ was New Troy;
In all the erth, imperiall as thou stant,
Pryncesse of townes, of pleasure, and of joy,
A richer restith under no Christen roy;
For manly power, with craftis naturall,
Fourmeth⁴ none fairer sith⁵ the flode of Noy.
London, thou art the flour of cities all!

⁴ Is formed.
⁵ since.

* The spelling of this poem, it will be noticed, follows the English model of the time in several respects, a fact owed perhaps to the courtesy of the poet, perhaps to the habit of the transcriber in the Cotton MS.

Gemme of all joy, jasper of jocunditie,
 Most myghty carbuncle of vertue and valour,
 Strong Troy in vigour and in strenuytie¹,
 Of royall cities rose and geraffour²,
 Empresse of townes, exalt in honour,
 In beawtie beryng the crone imperiall,
 Swete paradise precelling in pleasure,
 London, thow art the floure of cities all!

¹ fortitude.² gillyflower.

Aboue all ryuers thy Ryuer hath renowne,
 Whose beryall³ stremys, pleasaunt and preclare⁴,
 Under the lusty wallis renneth down,
 Where many a swanne doth swymme with wyngis
 fare,
 Where many a barge doth saile and row with are⁵,
 Where many a ship doth rest with toppe-royall.
 O towne of townes, patrone and not compare,
 London, thou art the floure of cities all!

³ beryl.
⁴ most famous.

Upon thy lusty Brigge⁶ of pylers white
 Been mërchauntis full royall to behold:
 Upon thy stretis goeth many a semely knyght
 [All clad] in velvet gownes and cheynes of gold.
 By Julyus Cesar thy Tour founded of old
 May be the hous of Mars victoryall,
 Whos artillary with tonge may not be told.
 London, thou art the flour of cities all!

⁶ fair bridge.

Strong be thy wallis that about thee standis;
 Wise be the people that within thee dwellis;
 Fresh is thy ryver with his lusty strandis;

Blith be thy churches, wele sownyng be thy bellis;
 Riche be thy merchauntis in substaunce that
 excellis;

Fair be their wives, right lovesom, white, and small;

¹ lovely.

² cauls, caps.

Clere¹ be thy virgyns, lusty under kellis².

London, thow art the flour of cities all!

Thy famous Maire* by pryncely governaunce

With swerd of justice thé rulith prudently.

No lord of Parys, Venyce, or Floraunce

In dignytie or honoure goeth to hym nye.

³ guide.

He is examplar, loode-ster, and guye³,

⁴ commendation. Principall patrone and roose⁴ orygynalle,

Above all maires as maister moost worthy;

London, thou art the flour of cities all!

* “Sir John Shaw, who was knighted on the field by Henry VII.”—*Gregory Smith*.

BE YE ANE LUVAR.

Be ye ane luvar, think ye nocht ye suld

Be weill adwysit in your gouerning?

Be ye nocht sa it will on yow be tauld;

Bewar thairwith for dreid of misdemyng¹.

¹ evil report.

Be nocht a wreche, nor skerche² in your spending,

² a niggard, or sparing.

Be layth³ alway to do amiss or schame,

³ loath.

Be rewlit rycht and keip this doctring,

Be secret, trew, inressing of your name.

Be ye ane lear⁴, that is werst of all;

⁴ liar.

Be ye ane tratlar⁵, that I hald als ewill;

⁵ tattler.

Be ye ane janglar⁶ and ye fra vertew fall;

⁶ wrangler.

Be nevir-mair on-to thir vicis thrall,

Be now and ay the maistir of your will;

Be nevir he that lesing⁷ sall proclame;

⁷ falsehood.

Be nocht of langage quhair ye suld be still;

Be secret, trew, inressing of your name.

Be nocht abasit for no wicket tung,

Be nocht sa set as I haif said yow heir:

Be nocht sa lerge vnto thir sawis sung⁸,

⁸ Be not so heedless to these sayings sung.

Be nocht our⁹ prowde, thinkand ye haif no peir.

⁹ Be not over.

Be ye so wyiss that vderis at yow leir¹⁰,

¹⁰ learn.

Be nevir he to sklander nor defame;

Be of your lufe no prechour as a freir;

Be secret, trew, inressing of your name.

TO A LADYE.

SWEIT roiss of vertew and of gentilnes,
¹ beauty. Delytsum lyllie of everie lustynes¹,
Richest in bontie, and in bewtie cleir,
And everie vertew that is [held most] deir,
Except onlie that ye ar mercyles.

² garden.
³ attend. In-to your garthe² this day I did persew³,
Thair saw I flowris that fresche wer of hew;
⁴ see. Baith quhyte and reid moist lusty wer to seyne⁴,
⁵ wholesome. And halsum⁵ herbis vpone stalkis grene;
Yit leif nor flour fynd could I nane of rew.

I dout that Merche with his cauld blastis keyne
Hes slane this gentill herbe that I of mene;
⁶ such pain. Quhois petewous deithe dois to my hart sic pane⁶
That I wald mak to plant his rute agane,
So comfortand his levis vnto me bene.

LAMENT FOR THE MAKARIS

QUHEN HE WES SEIK.

I THAT in heill¹ wes and glaidnes
Am trublit now with gret seiknes
And feblit with infirmitie ;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

* health.

Our plesance heir is all vane glory,
This fals warld is bot transitory,
The flesche is brukle², the Feynd is sle³;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

² brittle, frail.
³ sly.

The stait of man dois change and vary,
Now sound, now seik, now blyth, now sary⁴,
Now dansand mirry, now like to dee ;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁴ sorry.

No stait in erd⁵ heir standis sickir⁶;
As with the wynd wavis the wickir⁷
So wavis this warldis vanite ;
Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁵ earth.
⁶ secure.
⁷ osier twig.

* The burden of this poem, "The fear of death troubles me," Laing points out, is borrowed from a poem by Lydgate, which begins "So as I lay the other night."

¹ death.

Onto the ded¹ gois all estatis,
 Princis, prelotis, and potestatis,
 Baith riche and pur of all degre;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

² armed.³ in all contest.

He takis the knychtis in-to feild,
 Anarmit² vnder helme and scheild;
 Wictour he is at all melle³;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁴ sucking.

That strang vnmercifull tyrand
 Takis on the moderis breist sowkand⁴
 The bab full of benignite;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁵ the champion
 in the storm
 (dust) of battle.

He takis the campion in the stour⁵,
 The capitane closit in the tour,
 The lady in bour full of bewte;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁶ power.

He spairis no lord for his piscence⁶,
 Na clerk for his intelligence;
 His awfull strak may no man fle;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Art magicianis, and astrologgis,
 Rethoris, logicians, and theologgis,
 Thame helpis no conclusionis sle;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

In medecyne the most practicianis,
 Lechis, surrigianis, and phisicianis,
 Thame-self fra ded may not supple¹;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

¹ succour,
 defend.

I see that makaris² among the laif³
 Playis heir ther padyanis⁴, syne gois to graif⁵;
 Sparit is nocht ther faculte⁶;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

² poets.
³ rest.
⁴ pageants.
 grave.
⁶ their guild.

He hes done petuously devour
 The noble Chaucer, of makaris flour,
 The monk of Bery⁷ and Gower all thre;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁷ i.e. Lydgate.

The gude Syr Hew of Eglintoun,
 Ettrik, Heryot, et Wyntoun
 He hes tane out of this cuntre;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

That scorioun fell hes done infek⁸
 Maister Iohne Clerk and James Afflek
 Fra balat making and trigidë;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

⁸ has inhibited(?)

Holland and Barbour he has berevit;
 Allace, that he nought with ws lewit
 Schir Mungo Lokert of the Le!
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

- Clerk of Tranent eik he has tane,
 That maid the anteris¹ of Gawane;
 Schir Gilbert Hay endit has he;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- ¹ adventures.
- He has Blind Hary et Sandy² Traill
 Slaine with his schot of mortall hail,
 Quhilk Patrik Johnistoun myght nought fle;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- ² Alexander.
- He hes reft Merseir his endite³,
 That did in luf so lifly⁴ write,
 So schort, so quyk, of sentence hie⁵;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- ³ writing.
⁴ lively.
⁵ high.
- He hes tane Roull of Aberdene,
 And gentill Roull of Corstorphin;
 Two bettir fallowis did no man se;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- In Dunfermelyne he has done rove⁶
 With gud Maister Robert Henrisoun;
 Schir Iohne the Ros enbrast⁷ hes he;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- ⁶ whispered.
⁷ embraced.
- And he has now tane, last of aw⁸,
 Gud gentill Stobo and Quintyne Schaw,
 Of quham all wichtis hes pete;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.
- ⁸ all.

Gud Maister Walter Kennedy
 In poynt of dede lyis veraly;
 Gret reuth it wer that so suld be;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

Sen he has all my brether tane
 He will naught lat me lif alane;
 On forse I man¹ his nyxt pray be;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.

¹ perforce I must.

Sen for the deid² remeid is non,
 Best is that we for deid dispone³,
 Eftir our deid that lif may we;
 Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

² since for death.

³ dispose.

* It has been noted as curious that Dunbar in this Lament makes no mention of such well-known poets as Gavin Douglas, James I., and Thomas the Rhymer, unless indeed the last named be recognised under the cognomen of "Ettrik."

THE DANCE OF THE SEVIN DEIDLY SYNINIS.

OFF Februar the fyiftene nycht
Full lang befor the dayis lycht,
I lay in-till a trance;
And then I saw baith Hevin and Hell:
Me-thocht amangis the feyndis fell

¹ Mahomet (the Devil).

Mahoun¹ gart cry ane dance

² accursed persons.

Off schrewis² that wer nevir schrevin³,

³ confessed.

Aganis the feist of Fasternis evin⁴

⁴ the eve of Lent.

To mak thair observance.

⁵ gallants prepare a play.

He bad gallandis ga graith a gyiss⁵

⁶ gambols (from *Fr.* jambe).

And kast vp gamountis⁶ in the skyiss,

As varlotis does in France.

⁷ Proud.

⁸ haughty.

Heilie⁷ harlottis on hawtane⁸ wyiss

Come in with mony sindrie gyiss,

⁹ laughed.

Bot yit luche⁹ nevir Mahoun;

¹⁰ Till.

Quhill¹⁰ preistis come in with bair schevin nekkis,

¹¹ gestures of derision.

Than all the feyndis lewche and maid gekkis",

Blak-Belly and Bawsy-Brown.*

* "Popular names of certain spirits. *Bawsy-Brown* seems to be the English Robin Goodfellow, known in Scotland by the name of Brownie,"—HAILES. These six lines in the MSS. are made to follow the next stanza, but Laing must be considered right in assigning them an earlier place as above.

"Lat se," quod he, "Now quha begynniss?"

With that the fowll Sevin Deidly Synnis

Begowth to leip at anis¹.

¹ at once.

And first of all in dance wes Pryd,

With hair wyld bak and bonet on syd,

Lyk to mak vaistie wanis²;

² empty dwelling.

And round abowt him, as a quheill,

Hang all in rumpillis³ to the heill

³ disordered folds.

His kethat⁴ for the nanis⁵.

⁴ cassock.

⁵ nonce.

Mony proud trumpour⁶ with him trippit,

⁶ deceiver.

Throw skaldand fyre ay as thay skippit

Thay gyrnd⁷ with hiddouss granis.

⁷ grinned.

Than Yre come in with sturt⁸ and stryfe;

⁸ disturbance.

His hand wes ay vpoun his knyfe,

He brandeist lyk a beir:

Bostaris, braggaris, and barganeris⁹

⁹ quarrellers.

Eftir him passit, in-to pairis,

All bodin in feir of weir¹⁰,

¹⁰ arrayed in feature of war.

In iakkis¹¹ and stryppis and bonettis of steill,

¹¹ jackets of mail.

Thair leggis wer chenyteit¹² to the heill,

¹² covered with chain-mail.

Ffrawart wes thair affeir¹³:

¹³ Rude was their bearing.

Sum vpoun vdir with brandis beft¹⁴,

¹⁴ buffeted.

Sum jaggit¹⁵ vthiris to the heft

¹⁵ pricked.

With knyvis that scherp cowl scheir.

Nixt in the dance followit Invy,

Fild full of feid and fellony¹⁶,

¹⁶ feud and fierceness.

Hid malyce and dispyte:

Ffor pryvie hatrent that tratour trymlit.

Him followit mony freik¹⁷ dissymlit,

¹⁷ petulant folk.

With fenyeit wurdiss¹⁸ quhyte;

¹⁸ feigned words.

O

II

And flattereris in-to menis facis,
And bakbyttaris in secreit placis

¹ lie.

² whisperers of
false lies.

To ley¹ that had delyte;
And rownaris of fals lesingis²:
Allace, that courtis of noble kingis
Of thame can nevir be quyte!

✓ Nixt him in dans come Cuvatyce,
Rute of all evill and grund of vyce,
That nevir coud be content.

³ usurers.

⁴ Misers,
hoarders, and
gatherers.

⁵ wizard.

⁶ great quantity
(properly 128 lb.
weight).

⁷ wildfire.

⁸ emptied.

⁹ all kinds of
coinage.

Catyvis, wrechis, and okkeraris³,
Hud-pykis, hürdaris, and gadderaris⁴
All with that warlo⁵ went.

Out of thair throttis thay schot on vdder
Hett moltin gold, me-thocht, a fudder⁶,
As fyreflawcht⁷ maist fervent:
Ay as thay tomit⁸ thame of schot
Ffeyndis fild thame new vp to the thrott
With gold of allkin prent⁹.

Syne Sweirnes, at the secound bidding,
Come lyk a sow out of a midding,
Full slepy wes his grunyie¹⁰.

¹⁰ grunting
mouth.

¹¹ Many lazy
tun-bellied
gluttons.

¹² slothful idler.

¹³ drab.

¹⁴ solicitude.

Mony sweir bumbard-belly huddroun¹¹,
Mony slute daw¹² and slepy duddroun¹³,
Him serwit ay with sounyie¹⁴.

He drew thame furth in-till a chenye,
And Belliall with a brydill renyie

¹⁵ loins.

Evir lascht thame on the lunyie¹⁵.
In dance thay war so slaw of feit
Thay gaif thame in the fyre a heit

¹⁶ apprehension.

And maid thame quicker of counyie¹⁶.

Than Lichery, that lathly corss,
Come berand¹ lyk ane bagit² horss

¹ snorting.
² *baguette*.

And Ydilness did him leid.

Thair wes with him ane vgly sort,
Full mony stynkand fowll tramort³,

³ dead bodies.

That had in syn bene deid.

Quhen they wer entrit in the dance
Thay wer full strengre of countenance

Lyk turkass⁴ birnand reid.

⁴ torture-pincers.

All led thay vthir by the tersis,
Suppoiss thay fyleit⁵ with thair ersis,
It mycht be na remeid.

⁵ Although they
defiled.

Than the fowll monstir Glutteny
Off wame⁶ vnsasiable and gredy

⁶ belly.

To dance he did him dress⁷.

⁷ address.

Him followit mony fowll drunckart
With can and collep⁸, cop and quart,

⁸ a drinking
vessel.

In surffett and excess.

Full mony a waistless wallydrag⁹,
With wamiss vnweildable, did furth wag

⁹ *lüz*, the weakest
bird in a nest.

In creische¹⁰ that did inress.

¹⁰ grease.

“Drynk!” ay thay cryit, with mony a gaip;
The feyndis gaif thame hait leid to laip;

Thair leweray¹¹ wes na less.

¹¹ desire, reward.

Na menstrallis playit to thame but dowl¹²,
Ffor gle-men¹³ thair wer haldin owt,

¹² without doubt.

Be day and eik by nycht,

¹³ musicians.

Except a menstrall that slew a man,
Swa till his heretage he wan,
Entering be¹brief of richt.

- ¹ pageant. Than cryd Mahoun for a Heleand padyane¹;
 Syne ran a feynd to feche Makfadyane
 Ffar northwart in a nuke.
- ² By the time
 that he had
 cried the dirge. Be he the correnoch had done schout²
 Erschemen so gadderit him abowt
 In Hell grit rowme thay tuke.
- ³ heathenish
 crew; a play
 here on the
 word Ptar-
 migan. Thae tarmegantis³ with tag and tatter
 Ffull lowde in Ersche begowth to clatter,
 And rowp lyk revin and ruke⁴.
- ⁴ croak like raven
 and rook.
⁵ deafened. The Devill sa devit⁵ wes with thair yell
 That in the depest pot of Hell
 He smorit⁶ thame with smvke.*
- ⁶ smothered.

* A curious light is thrown by this satiric stanza upon the ancient antipathy of the Lowland Scots for the Highlanders. The antipathy appears to have been mutual.

AMENDIS TO THE TELYOURIS AND SOWTARIS.

BETUIX twell houris and ellevin
I dremed ane angell came fra Hevin,
With plesand stevin¹ sayand on hie
“Telyouris and Sowtaris², blist be ye!

¹ sound, voice.

² Tailors and
shoemakers.

“In Hevin hie ordand is your place
Aboif all sanctis in grit solace
Nixt God, grittest in dignitie:
Tailyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!

“The causs to yow is nocht vnkend³,
That God mismakkis ye do amend
Be craft and grit agilitie:
Tailyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!

³ unknown.

“Sowtaris with schone weill-maid and meit
Ye mend the faltis of ill-maid feit;
Quhairfoir to Hevin your saulis will fle:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!

“Is nocht in all this fair a flyrok⁴
That hes vpoun his feit a wyrok⁵,
Knowll tais, nor mowlis in no degrie⁶,
Bot ye can hyd thame: blist be ye!

⁴ deformed
person.

⁵ a corn or bony
excrecence.

⁶ Toes swollen at
the joints, or
chilblains to
any extent.

- ¹ clothes. “And ye tailyouris with weil-maid clais’
Can mend the werst-maid man that gais,
And mak him semely for to se:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!
- ² misfashioned. “Thocht God mak ane misfassonit² man,
Ye can him all schaip new agane
³ than three such. And fassoun him bettir be sic thre³:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!
- “Thocht a man haif a brokin bak
⁴ what matter. Haif he a gude crafty tailyour, quhatt rak⁴?
⁵ cunning. That can it cuver with craftis sliē⁵:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!
- “Off God grit kyndness may ye clame,
⁶ crookedness That helpis his peple fra cruke and lame⁶,
 and lameness.
⁷ help. Supportand faltis with your supple⁷:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!
- ⁸ In earth ye “In erd ye kyth sic⁸ mirakillis heir,
 show such. In Hevin ye sal be sanctis full cleir,
⁹ Though. Thocht⁹ ye be knavis in this cuntre:
Telyouris and Sowtaris, blist be ye!”

THE FENYEIT FREIR OF TUNGLAND.

As yung Awrora with cristall haile
In Orient schew hir visage paile
A sweuyng swyth did me assaile¹
 Off sonis of Sathanis seid ;
Me-thocht a Turk of Tartary
Come throw the boundis of Barbary
And lay forloppin² in Lumbardy
 Ffull lang in waithman weid³.

¹ A vision suddenly came upon me.

² fugitive.

³ in wanderer's dress.

Ffra baptasing for to eschew⁴
Thair a religious man he slew,
And cled him in his habit new ;
 Ffor he cowth wryte and reid.
Quhen kend⁵ was his dissimvlance
And all his cursit govirnance⁶
Ffor feir he fled and come in France,
 With littill of Lumbard leid⁷.

⁴ To avoid baptism.

⁵ known.

⁶ conduct.

⁷ language, lore.

To be a leiche he fenyt⁸ him thair,
Quhilk mony a man nicht rew evir-mair,
For he left nowthir seik nor sair
 Vnslane or he hyne yeid⁹.

⁸ To be a physician he feigned.

⁹ ere he thence went.

¹ *i.e.* he opened veins.² stroke.³ died.

Vane organis he full clenely carvit¹,
 Quhen of his straik² so mony starvit³,
 Dreid he had gottin that he desarvit
 He fled away gud speid.

In Scotland than, the narrest way,
 He come his cunnyng till assay;
 To sum man thair it was no play
 The preving⁴ of his sciens.

⁴ proving.⁵ As apothecary he did great hurt.

In pottingry he wrocht grit pyne⁵,
 He murdreist mony in medecyne:
 The jow⁶ was of a grit engyne⁷,
 And generit was of gyans⁸.

⁶ juggler.⁷ ingenuity.⁸ begot of giants.

In leichecraft he was homecyd;
 He wald haif, for a nicht to byd⁹,
 A haiknay and the hurt manis hyd,
 So meikle he was of myance¹⁰.
 His yrnis¹¹ was rude as ony rawchtir¹²,
 Quhair he leit blude it was no lawchtir;
 Full mony instrument for slawchtir
 Was in his gardevyance¹³.

⁹ *i.e.* for a night's attendance.¹⁰ means, resources.¹¹ instruments.¹² rafter.¹³ cabinet, *garde de viande*.

He cowth gif cure for laxatyve
 To gar a wicht horss want¹⁴ his lyve;
 Quha-evir assay wald, man or wyve,
 Thair hippis yeid¹⁵ hiddy-giddy.
 His practikis nevir war put to preif
 But suddane deid or grit mischief;
 He had purgatioun to mak a theif
 To dee withowt a widdy¹⁶.

¹⁴ To cause a strong horse lose.¹⁵ went.¹⁶ halter, gallows.

Vnto no mess pressit this prelat
 For sound of sacring¹ bell nor skellat²;
 As blak-smith bruikit was his pallat³

Ffor battering at the study⁴.

Thocht he come hame a new-maid channoun
 He had dispensit with matynnis channoun;
 On him come nowthir stole nor fannoun⁵
 For smowking of the smydy.

¹ holy.
² small bell or
 crier's rattle.
³ begrimed was
 his poll.
⁴ anvil.

⁵ scarf on left arm
 of a priest at
 mass.

Me-thocht seir fassonis he assailyeit⁶
 To mak the quintessance, and failyeit;
 And, quhen he saw that nocht availyeit,

A fedrem⁷ on he tuke,

And schupe⁸ in Turkey for to fle.
 And quhen that he did mont on he
 All fowlis ferleit⁹ quhat he sowld be
 That evir did on him luke.

⁶ many methods
 he tried.

⁷ feathering.

⁸ prepared.

⁹ marvelled.

Sum held he had bene Dedalus,
 Sum the Mynataur mervalus,
 Sum the Martis smyth Wlcanus,
 And sum Saturnus kuke.

And evir the cuschettis¹⁰ at him tuggit,
 The rukis him rent, the ravynis him druggit¹¹,
 The hudit crawis his hair furth raggit¹²,
 The hevin he nicht not bruke¹³.

¹⁰ wood pigeons.

¹¹ dragged.

¹² tore.

¹³ enjoy.

The myttane¹⁴ and Sanct Martynis fowle¹⁵
 Wend¹⁶ he had bene the hornit howle;
 Thay set avpone him with a yowle¹⁷,
 And gaif him dynt for dynt.

¹⁴ a hawk.
¹⁵ the marten.

¹⁶ Deemed.

¹⁷ scream.

¹ Cuckoo, cormorant, and hawk.

The golk, the gormaw, and the gled¹
 Best him with buffettis quhill he bled;
 The spar-halk to the spring him sped,
 Als fers as fyre of flynt.

² a hawk.

³ in each ear.

⁴ magpie.

⁵ tear.

⁶ without stop.

⁷ claws.

⁸ possess.

⁹ in a grasp.

The tarsall² gaif him tug for tug,
 A stanchell hang in ilka lug³,
 The pyot⁴ furth his pennis did rug⁵,
 Thi stork straik ay but stynt⁶.
 The bissart, bissy but rebuik,
 Scho was so cleverus of hir clvik⁷
 His bawis he nicht not langer bruik⁸
 Scho held thame at ane hint⁹.

¹⁰ jackdaws.

¹¹ two kinds of

hawk.

¹² mews.

¹³ made attack.

¹⁴ pecked.

¹⁵ uproar.

Thik was the clud of kayis¹⁰ and crawis,
 Of marleyonis, mittanis¹¹, and of mawis¹²,
 That bikkrit¹³ at his berd with blawis
 In battell him abowt.
 Thay nybillit¹⁴ him with noyis and cry,
 The rerd¹⁵ of thame raiss to the sky,
 And evir he cryit on Fortoun, Fy!
 His lyfe was in-to dowt.

¹⁶ mocked with a screech.

¹⁷ at its pleasure.

¹⁸ reached.

¹⁹ blow.

²⁰ unwittingly
 he betrayed
 himself.

²¹ drenched.

²² oxen all
 streaked.

The ja him skrippit with a skryke¹⁶,
 And skornit him as it was lyk¹⁷;
 The egill strong at him did stryke,
 And rawcht¹⁸ him mony a rowt¹⁹.
 Ffor feir vncunnandly he cawkit²⁰,
 Quhill all his pennis war drownd and drawkit²¹;
 He maid a hundreth nolt all hawkit²²
 Beneth him with a spowt.

He schewre¹ his feddreme that was schene²,
 And slippit owt of it full clene,
 And in a myre vp to the ene

¹ sheared, cut.
² beautiful.

Amang the glar³ did glyd.
 The fowlis all at the fedrem dang⁴
 As at a monster thame amang,
 Quhill all the pennis of it owtsprang
 In-till the air full wyde.

³ mud.

⁴ struck.

And he lay at the plunge evir-mair
 Sa lang as any ravin did rair⁵;
 The crawis him socht with cryis of cair

⁵ make noise.

In every schaw⁶ besyde.
 Had he reveild bene to the rwikis⁷
 Thay had him revin all with thair clwikis⁸,
 Thre dayis in dub amang the dukis⁹
 He did with dirt him hyde.

⁶ covert.

⁷ rooks.

⁸ claws.

⁹ in gutter among
 the ducks.

The air was dirkit¹⁰ with the fowlis
 That come with yawmeris¹¹ and with yowlis¹²,
 With skryking¹³, skrimming¹⁴, and with scowlis,

¹⁰ darkened.

¹¹ clamourings.

¹² screams.

¹³ screeching.

¹⁴ shrieking.

To tak him in the tyde,
 I walknit¹⁵ with the noyis and schowte,
 So hiddowis beir¹⁶ was me abowte.
 Sen-syne¹⁷ I curss that cankerit¹⁸ rowte
 Quhair-evir I go or ryde.

¹⁵ awakened.

¹⁶ noise of flight.

¹⁷ Since then.

¹⁸ ill-tempered.

¹ Solicitors.

THE LADYIS SOLISTARIS.¹

² These.

³ known.

THIR² ladyis fair that makis repair
And in the court ar kend³,
Thre dayis thair thay will do mair
Ane mater for till end
Than thair gud men will do in ten
For ony craft thay can ;
So weill thay ken quhat tyme and quhen
Thair menes thay sowld mak than.

⁴ trouble.

⁵ gentle.

With littill noy⁴ thay can convoy
Ane mater fynaly,
Richt myld and moy⁵, and keip it coy
On evyns quyetly.
Thay do no miss, bot gif thay kiss
And keipis collatioun⁶,
Quhat rek⁷ of this? Thair mater is
Brocht to conclusioun.

⁸ know.

⁹ knowledge.

¹⁰ solicit.

¹¹ whit.

Ye may wit⁸ weill, thay haif grit feill⁹
Ane mater to solist¹⁰;
Traist as the steill, syne nevir a deill¹¹
Quhen thay cum hame is mist.

Thir lairdis ar, methink, richt far
 Sic ladeis behaldin to,
 That sa weill dar go to the bar
 Quhen thair is ocht ado¹. ¹ aught astir.

Thairfoir I reid², gif ye haif pleid³
 Or mater in-to pley⁴, ² counsel.
³ pleading.
 To mak remeid⁵ send in your steid ⁴ in plea.
⁵ remedy.
 Your ladeis grathit⁶ vp gay. ⁶ clad.
 Thay can defend, evin to the end,
 Ane mater furth express ;
 Suppois⁷ thay spend, it is vnkend, ⁷ Although.
 Thair geir⁸ is nocht the les. ⁸ substance.

In quyet place, and thay haif space,
 Within less nor twa houris
 Thay can, percaice⁹, purchess sum grace ⁹ perchance.
 At the compositouris.
 Thair compositioun, without suspitioun,
 Thair fynaly is endit ;
 With expeditioun and full remissioun
 And seilis thairto appendit.

Alhaill¹⁰ almoist thay mak the coist ¹⁰ All whole.
 With sobir recompens
 Richt littill loist, thay get indoist¹¹ ¹¹ indorsed.
 Alhaill thair evidens.
 Sic ladyis wyiss, thay ar to prysis¹², ¹² praise.
 To say the veretie ;
 Swa can devyiss¹³, and nane suppryiss ¹³ That can so
contrive.
 Thame nor thair honestie.

DISCRETIOUN IN ASKING.

OFF every asking followis nocht
Rewaird, but gif sum caus be wrocht,
And quhair causs is men weill ma sie,
And quhair nane is it wil be thocht
In asking sowld discretioun be.

¹ though.

² constant repetition, drone.

Ane fule, thocht¹ he haif causs or nane
Cryis ay "Gif me," in-to a drene²;
And he that drones ay as ane bee
Sowld haif ane heirar dull as stane:
In asking sowld discretioun be.

³ serves for.

⁴ is of my sort.

⁵ dies.

Sum askis mair than he deservis;
Sum askis far les than he servis³;
Sum schames to ask and breidis of me⁴,
And all withowt reward he stervis⁵:
In asking sowld discretioun be.

⁶ without.

To ask but⁶ seruice hurtis gud fame;
To ask for seruice is not to blame;
To serve and leif in beggartie
To man and maistir is baith schame:
In asking sowld discretioun be.

He that dois all his best servyiss
 May spill it all with crakkis¹ and cryis
 Be fowll inoportunitie,
 Few wordis may suffice to the wyis:
 In asking sowld discretioun be.

¹ boastings.

Nocht neidfull is men sowld be dum;
 Na-thing is gottin but wordis sum.
 Nocht sped but diligence we se;
 For na-thing it allane will cum:
 In asking sowld discretioun be.

Asking wald haif convenient place,
 Convenient tyme, lasar, and space,
 But haist or preiss of grit menyie²,
 But hairt abasit, but tounge rekless:
 In asking sowld discretioun be.

² effect of great force.

Sum nicht haif Ye, with littill cure³,
 That hes oft Nay, with grit labour;
 All for his tyme nocht byd⁴, can he
 He tynis⁵ baith eirand and honour:
 In asking sowld discretioun be.

³ Yea, with little care.

⁴ abide, wait.

⁵ loses.

Suppois the servand be lang vnquit⁶
 The lord sumtyme rewaird will it.
 Gife he dois not, quhat remedy?
 To flyte⁷ with fortoun is no wit:
 In asking sowld discretioun be.

⁶ unrequited.

⁷ scold

THE PETITION OF THE GRAY HORSE, AULD DUNBAR.

¹ Now when
lovers come with
gifts openly.

² fillies will be
decked and
clothed.

³ commonality.

⁴ Yule jade.

⁵ condition.

⁶ gambols.

⁷ outside.

⁸ crop grass.

⁹ To coal-heavers
then must.

¹⁰ are scabbed,
crooked, and
rheumous.

¹¹ Though.

¹² placed.

¹³ housing.

¹⁴ covered.

Now lufferis cummis with largess lowd¹

Quhy sould not palfrayis thane be prowde,

Quhen gillettis wil be schomd and schroud²

That ridden ar baith with lord and lawd³?

Schir, lett it nevir in toun be tald

That I sould be ane Yuillis yald⁴!

Quhen I was young and into ply⁵,

And wald cast gammaldis⁶ to the sky,

I had beine bocht in realmes by⁷,

Had I consentit to be sauld.

Schir, lett it nevir in toun be tald

That I sould be ane Yuillis yald!

With gentill horss quhen I wald knyp⁸

Thane is thair laid on me ane quhip;

To colleveris than man⁹ I skip

That scabbit ar, hes cruik and cald¹⁰.

Schir, lett it nevir in toun be tald

That I sould be ane Yuillis yald!

Thocht¹¹ in the stall I be nocht clappit¹²

As cursouris that in silk beine trappit,

With ane new housse¹³ I wald be happit¹⁴

Aganis this Crysthinmes for the cald.
 Schir, lett it nevir in town be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald!

Suppois¹ I war ane ald yaid aver²,
 Schott furth our clewch³ to pull the claver⁴,
 And had the strenth of all Stranaver,
 I wald at Youll be housit and stald.
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I suld be ane Yuillis yald!

¹ Although.
² old spent horse.
³ ravine, rough
 ground.
⁴ clover.

I am ane auld horss, as ye know,
 That evir in duill dois drug⁵ and draw;
 Great court horss puttis me fra the staw⁶
 To fang the fog be firthe and fald⁷.
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald!

⁵ in sorrow does
 drag.
⁶ from the stall.
⁷ To bite the
 moss by out-
 field and in-
 field.

haif run lang furth in the feild
 On pastouris that ar plane and peild⁸;
 I mycht be now tein in for eild⁹;
 My beikis ar spruning he¹⁰ and bauld.
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald!

⁸ stripped.
⁹ taken in for age.
¹⁰ My corner
 teeth are pro-
 jecting high.

My mane is turned in-to quhyt,
 And thairof ye haff all the wyt¹¹;
 Quhen uther horss had bran to byt
 I gat bot griss cnype¹² gif I wald.
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald.

¹¹ blame.

¹² but grass to
 crop.

¹ doted on. I was nevir dautit¹ into stabell ;
 My lyf hes bene so miserable
 My hyd to offer I am [bot] abill
² For ill-shorn straw that I would tear. For evill schom strae that I reive wald².
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald !

³ savings, goods. And yitt, suppois my thrift³ be thyne,
⁴ possession. Gif that I die your aucht⁴ within
⁵ shoemakers. Latt nevir the soutteris⁵ have my skin
⁶ gnawed by ugly gums. With uglie gumes to be gnawin⁶.
 Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald !

⁷ over-ridden mule. The court hes done my curage cuill,
 And maid me ane forriddin muill⁷;
⁸ trappings. Yett, to weir trappouris⁸ at this Yuill,
⁹ joint, *litz*. I wald be spurrit at everie spald⁹.
 shoulder-blade. Schir, latt it nevir in toun be tald
 That I sould be ane Yuillis yald !

RESPONSIO REGIS.

¹⁰ treasurer. Eftir our wrettingis, thesaurer¹⁰,
 Tak in this gray horss, Auld Dunbar,
¹¹ Which. Quhilk¹¹ in my aucht with schervice trew
¹² grey. In lyart¹² changeit is in hew.
 Gar howss him now aganis this Yuill,
¹³ deck. And busk¹³ him lyk ane beschopis muill ;
 For with my hand I have indost
 To pay quhat-euir his trappouris cost.

BEST TO BE BLYTH.

Full oft I muse and hes in thocht
How this fals world is ay on flocht¹,
 Quhair no-thing ferme is nor degest²;
And quhen I haif my mynd all socht,
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

¹ on wing.

² composed.

This world evir dois flicht and wary³;
Ffortoun sa fast hir quheill dois cary,
 Na tyme in turning can it tak rest:
For quhois fals change suld none be sary⁴;
 Ffor to be blyth me-think it best.

³ flit and vary.

⁴ sorry.

Wald men consididir in mynd richt weill,
Or⁵ Fortoun on him turn hir quheill,
 That erdly honour may nocht lest,
His fall less panefull he suld feill:
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

⁵ Ere.

Quha with this warld dois warsill and stryfe⁶,
And dois his dayis in dolour dryfe,
 Thocht⁷ he in lordschip be possest,
He levis bot ane wretchit lyfe:
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

⁶ wrestle and strive.

⁷ Though.

Off warldis gud and grit richness
 * fruit. Quhat frucht¹ hes man but miriness?
 Thocht he this warld had eist and west
 2 without. All wer pouertie but² glaidness;
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

Quho suld for tynsall³ drowp or de
 For thyng that is bot vanitie,
 4 Since. Sen⁴ to the lyfe that evir dois lest
 Heir is bot twynklyng of ane ee;
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

Had I for warldis vnkyndness
 In hairt tane ony haviness,
 Or fro my plesans bene opprest,
 5 long ago. I had bene deid langsyne⁵, dowlless:
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

How-evir this warld do change and vary
 Lat ws in hairt nevir-moir be sary,
 Bot evir be reddy and address
 6 tumult. To pass out of this frawdfull fary⁶;
 For to be blyth me-think it best.

MEDITATIOUN IN WYNTIR.

IN-to thir dirk and drublie dayis¹

Quhone² sabill all the hewin arrayis

With mystie vapouris, cluddis, and skyis,

Nature all curage me denyis

Of sangis, ballattis, and of playis.

Quhen that the nycht dois lenthin houris,

With wind, with hail, and havy schouris,

My dule³ spreit dois lurk forschoir⁴,

My hairt for languor dois forloir⁵

For laik of symmer with his flouris.

I walk⁶, I turne, sleip can I nocht,

I vexit am with havy thocht;

This warld all our I cast about,

And euer the mair I am in dout,

The mair that I remeid have socht.

I am assayit on everie syde

Dispair sayis ay, "In tyme prowye,

And get sum-thing quhairon to leif,

Or with grit trouble and mischeif

Thou sall in-to this court abyde."

Than Patience sayis, "Be nocht agast;

Hald Hoip and Treuthe within thé fast,

And lat Fortoun wirk furthe hir rage,

Quhen that no rasoun may assuage,

Quhill that hir glas be run and past."

¹ these dark and troubled days.

² When.

³ doleful.

⁴ dejected.

⁵ become useless.

⁶ wake.

And Prudence in my eir sayis ay,
 "Quhy wald thou hald that will away?¹
 Or craif that thou may have no space²,
 Thow tending to ane-uther place,
 A journey going everie day?"

¹ that which will
away.

² that which thou
mayest in no
wise have.

And than sayis Age, "My freind, cum neir,
 And be nocht strange, I thé requair!
 Cum, brodir, by the hand me tak,
 Remember thou hes compt to mak
 Off all thi tyme thow spendit heir."

³ Presently.

⁴ gates.

⁵ These open
await you,
//, shall you
endure.

⁶ stoop.

Syne³ Deid castis up his yettis⁴ wyd,
 Saying, "Thir oppin sall ye abyde⁵.
 Albeid that thow were never sa stout,
 Vndir this lyntall sall thow lowt⁶;
 Thair is nane vther way besyd."

⁷ chest.

⁸ prevent.

For feir of this all day I drowp:
 No gold in kist⁷, nor wyne in cown,
 No ladeis bewtie, nor luiffis blys
 May lat⁸ me to remember this,
 How glaid that ever I dyne or sowp.

⁹ shorten.

Yit, quhone the nycht begynnys to schort⁹
 It dois my spreit sum part confort
 Off thocht oppressit with the schouris.
 Cum, lustie symmer! with thy flouris,
 That I may leif in sum disport.

GAVIN DOUGLAS.

GAVIN DOUGLAS.

ON the eve of the great battle of Flodden, in which the flower of Scottish chivalry was fated to fall, when James IV., notwithstanding the urgent entreaty of his council and the obvious melting of his troops, had declared his resolve to fight, the last noble to urge prudence upon the king was the aged Earl of Angus. His years and his great services, apart from the wisdom of his words, entitled him to be heard ; but James, as headstrong as he was gallant, merely turned upon him with a word of scorn : “ Angus, if you are afraid, you may go home.” Full of sorrow and foreboding, it will be remembered, the earl rode from the camp that night, but, loyal to the crown despite the insult he had received, he left his two eldest sons behind, and in the dire disaster which ensued, both of these, George, Master of Angus, and Sir William Douglas of Glenbervie, perished, along with two hundred others of the Douglas name.

This earl, fifth in succession from the first Earl Douglas of Angus and the youngest daughter of King Robert III., was Archibald, surnamed “ Bell the Cat ” from a famous historic incident of the

days of James III., but generally styled the Great Earl of Angus. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Robert, Lord Boyd, Lord High Chamberlain of Scotland, and by her he had four sons, the third of whom was Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld.

These antecedents, together with some knowledge of the feudal clan spirit of the times, throw a necessary light upon the character and career of a man who, while possessing the noble temper and ardent genius of a poet, had to sustain the difficult part of a high ecclesiastic of those days, and the obligations of the scion of a great ruling house.

Tantallon castle, whose ruins frown yet out upon the Bass; Douglas castle, the cradle of his race, among the Lanark hills; Dudhope near Dundee, or Abernethy in Strathearn—any of these may have been the birth-place of the poet, for all of them were residences of the Earls of Angus. The date of his birth, from his own words before the Lords of Council in 1515, was at the end of 1474 or beginning of 1475. From 1489 to 1494 he studied at St. Andrews, his name appearing upon the registers among the Licentiati or Master of Arts in the latter year; and it is probable that he afterwards spent some time at seats of learning abroad, though the statement* that “there is undoubted proof that his education was finished at the University of Paris” still lacks corroboration.

His later career affords a striking contrast to that of his contemporary Dunbar. It is as if the fortunes

* Warton's *History of English Poetry*, vol. iii., p. 3.

of the rival houses of March and Douglas had been fated to find illustration in the lives of their respective poet-descendants. Hardly had Douglas reached his majority in 1496 when the king conferred upon him the teinds of Monymusk in Aberdeenshire. This was followed two years later by a presentation to the parsonage of Glenquhorn when it should become vacant by the resignation of Sir Alexander Symson. He was also, probably through the interest of his mother's family, made parson of Linton and rector of Hauch, now Prestonkirk, near Dunbar. It was while engaged in his pastoral duties there that he composed his first allegorical poem, "The Palice of Honour," and Mr. Laing has suggested with much probability that this production, dedicated as it was to James IV., induced the king to confer upon Douglas his next and more important step in church preferment. At any-rate, about 1501, the year in which "The Palice of Honour" was finished, the poet, while allowed to retain his former benefice, was appointed Dean or Provost of the Collegiate Church of St. Giles in Edinburgh. "This church, which was on a more extensive scale than any other of the kind in the country, except the Chapel-Royal at Stirling, supported a provost, a curate, sixteen prebendaries, and seven other offices, on the original foundation, to which was superadded a vast number of altars and chaplainries, some of them richly endowed."* Douglas's position as head of this foundation was one not only of ample emolument but of considerable consequence.

* *Works of Gavin Douglas*, ed. John Small, M.A., p. 7.

He is known from existing documents to have been conscientious in celebration of the religious services of the cathedral; his presence is recorded at meetings of the Lords of Council; in September, 1512, he was one of the great assize which passed an act anent "the resset of Rebellis, and Personis being at our souerane Lordis horne;" and he is supposed to have even visited Rome for the furtherance of certain interests at the papal court. Of more importance at the present day, however, was another of his occupations. Sometime during the early years of his Provostship of St. Giles, Douglas, it is believed, composed his allegory "King Hart," and made his translation of Ovid's "Art of Love." The latter performance has unfortunately been lost, but there can be no doubt that the effort prepared the way for the production of his greatest work. In January, 1512, he began his translation of Virgil, an arduous but apparently congenial task, and the speed at which he wrote may be judged from the fact that he finished it in July of the following year, two months before the national disaster which was to be the crisis of his own fortunes, the red field of Flodden.

It has already been mentioned that the two eldest brothers of the poet fell with their king on that fatal field. Upon hearing this dark news, the old earl, their father, retired to St. Mains, a religious house in Galloway, where he died of grief in the beginning of 1514.

This treble loss in his family, following the great

disaster to the country, was pregnant of stirring consequences to Gavin Douglas. At one blow it put an end to his poetical efforts, and cast him into the whirl of political affairs. In the queen's first great personal distress at the loss of her husband the Provost of St. Giles had been appointed, with one or two other Lords of Council, to wait daily upon her for purposes of consolation and advice; and on the 30th of September, his father being then Provost of Edinburgh, Douglas was made a free burghess of the city "communi bono ville."

It has been concluded that this latter honour may have been conferred out of compliment to the Earl of Angus, or on account of the poet's own literary fame. But in the circumstances of the time it seems more probable that the freedom was conferred as stated "for the town's common good"—as a further means of attaching the personal and family interest of Douglas to the city. From this it would appear that already the Provost of St Giles was recognized as exerting an influence worth propitiating in matters of state. An impending event, however, was to place Douglas's influence above all question.

Upon the death of the old lord, the earldom of Angus was inherited by Archibald, the son of the poet's eldest brother, a young nobleman as remarkable for his personal comeliness as for his ambition and feudal power. The new earl speedily attracted the attention of the youthful queen, who encouraged his addresses, and finally, only eleven months after Flodden, on the pretext that the support of the power-

ful Douglas clan was needed by the throne, gave him her hand in the church of Kinnoull.*

It is to be expected that, for feudal reasons, if from no more personal motives, the poet did all in his power to further his nephew's marriage, and this fact may account, to some extent at least, for the confidence and favour bestowed upon him from the first by the queen. As early as June 1514, she nominated him Abbot of Aberbrothock, the most valuable of the Scottish abbacies, and in September of that year, a month after her marriage, she commissioned him to act as her representative with plenary powers before the Lords of Council.

But trouble was already in the air, and the high hopes of the house of Douglas were fated to bring more than disappointment upon the poet. The hasty and ill-managed marriage of Queen Margaret to so powerful a noble as Angus had at once excited the alarm of the Scottish peers. "It was investing the house of Douglas with almost royal dignity, and the experience of the last hundred years had shown only too well how insolent, daring, and ambitious that house could be." That this apprehension was not altogether unfounded may be gathered from one fact. James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow and Chancellor of Scotland, having spoken strongly against the royal marriage, was seized by Angus at Perth and forced to

* Mr. Small, in an interesting note, draws attention to the fact that the present Royal Family of Great Britain derives its descent from this marriage, the issue of the union, Lady Margaret Douglas, born in 1515, having "married Matthew, fourth Earl of Lennox, whose son, Lord Darnley, husband of Queen Mary, was father of James VI."

surrender the Great Seal, which was then handed to the keeping of Gavin Douglas. For some months thereafter, though the Lords of Council immediately ordered him to restore the sign of authority, the poet appears to have held the office, or at least the title, of Chancellor. The popular feeling of the time is indicated by the statement in a contemporary diary that "all the court was rewlit by the Erle of Angus, Mr. Gawin Dowglass, and the Drummonds,* but nocht weill." Moved by their apprehensions, the Lords declared that by her marriage the queen had forfeited the guardianship of her son James V.; and they determined to recall the Duke of Albany, grandson of James II. and cousin of James IV., from France to the regency of Scotland.

Meanwhile, the archbishopric of St. Andrews having become opportunely vacant, the queen had nominated Gavin Douglas to the primacy, recommending him to Pope Leo the Tenth as second to none in learning and virtue. But the canons, partaking the spirit of the times, elected John Hepburn, their prior, to the see, and the latter, laying siege to the archiepiscopal castle, expelled the retainers of Douglas, who had taken possession. Nor did the Earl of Angus, with a succour of two hundred horse, manage to reinstate his uncle. Hepburn was in turn ousted by Andrew Foreman, Bishop of Moray, who had obtained the papal bulls for his own appointment, and by bestowing the priory of Coldingham on the brother of Lord Hume, had prevailed upon that nobleman to support him with

* The mother of Angus was a daughter of Lord Drummond.

ten thousand men-at-arms. Douglas, however, actuated by a spirit of decency which appears to have been rare in his time, withdrew from the disgraceful rivalry. His moderation, nevertheless, seemed likely to go without reward, for the abbacy of Aberbrothock, which he had considered secure, was confirmed to his rival, Archbishop Beaton.

Even this was not the last of the poet's troubles just then. In January, 1515, the bishopric of Dunkeld became vacant. Once more the queen named Douglas for preferment ; and in this case, by the aid, it is supposed, of her brother Henry VIII., obtained the papal confirmation of her choice. But the Earl of Athole had induced the canons to postulate his brother, Andrew Stewart, and, the Duke of Albany having now arrived from France, Douglas was summoned before the Lords of Council, found guilty of negotiating for benefices at the papal court, and forthwith consigned to prison. The offence with which he was charged was one forbidden by several old Scottish statutes, and the revival of these now sufficiently served Albany's purpose, which was to weaken the queen's party by removing from it one of its most able adherents. For more than twelve months Douglas was confined under charge of his former rival, Hepburn, in the castles of St. Andrews, Dunbar, and Edinburgh, and from some of his letters extant, he appears to have chafed considerably at his imprisonment. The indignity was also deeply felt by his friends. Fortune, however, turned presently with a suddenness characteristic of the times. The imprisonment of so noble a

prelate brought about a certain revulsion of popular feeling in the country. The Pontiff was not slow to threaten with excommunication the troublers of his bishop, and Albany began to fear that, for his severity in this and other matters, he might have to reckon with the queen's brother, Henry VIII. Douglas was accordingly released from imprisonment, resealed as a lord of council, consecrated, first by Archbishop Beaton at Glasgow, and afterwards by the primate, Foreman, at St. Andrews,* and assisted to wrest his episcopal palace from Stewart by force of arms.

The poet was now deeply loaded with debt, but he set about the discharge of his duties to his bishopric and the state with diligence and success. He finished the bridge at Dunkeld begun by his predecessor, Bishop Brown; and in May, 1517, he was one of the three ambassadors to France whose mission resulted in the memorable treaty of Rouen.

So important was this treaty, which bound Scotland and France in a league of mutual defence against England, that the vacillating Albany, heartily sick of the troubles of his regency, made the signing of it an excuse for visiting his vast estates on the Continent. His absence was the signal for immediate anarchy at home. The Archbishops of St. Andrews and

* In 1489, when James IV., in one of his accesses of religious feeling, had caused himself to be enrolled as a canon of Glasgow cathedral, an Act of the Scottish Parliament had erected Glasgow into an archbishopric, with the Bishops of Dunkeld, Dunblane, Galloway, and Argyle as suffragans, and the Act had been confirmed by a Bull of Pope Innocent VIII. But the measure had been strongly opposed by Foreman, and he refused to recognise the consecration of Douglas of Glasgow.

Glasgow, and the Earls of Arran, Angus, Argyle, and Huntly had been named as a commission of regency, but the power of Angus so overshadowed the others that in 1520 a conspiracy was formed by them to seize him in Edinburgh. The chief of this conspiracy was James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, and he and the chiefs of his faction met in the house of Archbishop Beaton at the foot of Blackfriars Wynd, to arrange the execution of their plot. On the opposite side of the same street stood the palace of the bishops of Dunkeld, and while the conspirators were still deliberating, Douglas was announced. Beaton received his suffragan apart, when the latter tendered an offer from his nephew to retire with his friends from the city if allowed to do so in safety. After urging the keeping of the peace, Douglas reminded the archbishop that it was his duty as a churchman to preserve order. Mediation, however, was vain. The Hamiltons, being the more numerous party, felt sure of their object; and accordingly Beaton made excuses to Douglas, and, protesting that he was ignorant of Arran's intentions, ended his disavowal with the words, "Upon my conscience, I cannot help what is about to happen." As he spoke the archbishop solemnly laid his hand upon his heart, when Douglas heard the clink of mail under the priestly vestment. "My lord," he exclaimed indignantly, "I perceive your conscience is not good, for I hear it clattering" (*Anglice*, telling tales). And immediately betaking himself to his nephew, he bade him defend himself like a man. "As for me,"

he said, "I will go to my chamber and pray for you." Angus at once took possession of the High Street, which could then be approached only by steep narrow closes on each side; and when the Hamiltons presently rushed to the attack they found themselves overborne in these narrow entries by the long lances of their opponents. The result was a complete victory for the party of Angus, seventy of the Hamiltons being left dead on the street; and while Home of Wedderburn, coming with eight hundred borderers to assist Angus, burst with sledge-hammers through one of the city gates, Arran and his son fled out of another upon a coal-horse from which they had thrown the load. Archbishop Beaton himself, who had taken an active part in the fight, was pursued to the high altar of the Church of the Blackfriars, and was on the point of being slain, the rochet being torn from his back, when he was saved by the interposition of Gavin Douglas.

For many years this fight was remembered in Edinburgh by the significant name of *Clean-the-Causeway*.

Had Angus, now at the summit of power, been as true to the queen as Gavin Douglas had proved true to him the rest of the poet's days might have been spent in the honourable administration of his diocese. But when Margaret returned from her brother's court, whither she had fled to escape the severity of Albany, she had grave charges to bring against her husband. Not only had he forsaken her when she lay ill with typhus at Morpeth, but he had appropriated her Ettrick Forest rents, worth 4000 merks yearly, and,

worst of all, he had been guilty of abducting Lady Jane Stuart, a daughter of the house of Traquair, whom he was keeping at Douglas Castle. The queen's love for her husband was now changed into hate, she meditated a divorce, and in November, 1521, she procured the return of Albany with a strong French armament and ample munitions of war. Before this display of force Angus fled to the Kirk of Steyll, now Ladykirk, in Berwickshire, and despatched Bishop Douglas to the English court with counter charges of infidelity against Margaret.

The effort to enlist Henry's interest against his sister entirely failed, and in turn Douglas had the mortification to learn that the Regent had deprived him of his bishopric and other benefices. But the keenest stroke was to come when he heard that Angus, his stronghold of Tantallon having been seized by Albany, had forsaken his own cause, and was treating with the Regent for pardon and permission to retire to France.

It is not too much to say that this final blow, striking his most vital sense, the honour of the house of Douglas, broke the poet's heart. A last letter exists written by him from a London inn to Cardinal Wolsey, which reveals his anguish of mind. He writes of himself as a "desolatt and wofull wycht," and refers to "thair ontreuth that causit me labour for the wele of thair Prince, and thair securite, quhilk now has wrocht thair avne confusioun and perpetuall schayme." For some months he remained in London, on intimate terms with Wolsey and Wolsey's friend, Polydore Virgil the historian. Had he lived he might still, despite the intrigues of his rival Beaton,

have re-entered Scotland as Archbishop of St. Andrews; for the primacy presently became vacant by the death of Foreman, and Angus soon returned to the north with greater influence than ever. But the plague struck him down. He died in September, 1522, at the house of his friend Lord Dacre, and was buried by his own desire in the Hospital Church of the Savoy, by the side of the Bishop of Leighlin.

Of the facts of Douglas's life it is somewhat difficult now to judge, so wide is the difference between the habit of thought of his time and ours. Dr. Merry Ross has blamed the poet for his constant efforts to promote the interests of his family, but the censure seems hardly just. It is never a difficult task to take exception, and it seems only fair to remark of Douglas that while his faults were those of the best men of his time, his virtues were many and were exceptional. In each of his high offices he is known to have scrupulously fulfilled his duty, and the fact remains that with many opportunities of enriching himself, he died poor. The picture of him given, with the intuition of genius, by Sir Walter Scott in "*Marmion*," seems the fittest and truest.

A bishop by the altar stood,
A noble lord of Douglas blood,
With mitre sheen, and rocquet white;
Yet showed his meek and thoughtful eye
But little pride of prelacy;
More pleased that, in a barbarous age,
He gave rude Scotland Virgil's page,
Than that beneath his rule he held
The bishopric of fair Dunkeld.*

* Canto vi., st. 11.

Of Douglas's longest original work, "The Palice of Honour," no manuscript is known to exist. The earliest texts are an edition printed in London about 1553 by William Copland, and an Edinburgh edition of 1579. The latter was reprinted at Perth in 1787, and by Pinkerton in 1792, before its reproduction in facsimile by the Bannatyne Club in 1827. The poem of "King Hart" and some verses by Douglas on "Conscience" are contained in the Maitland MS. (1555-1585) in the Pepysian Library at Cambridge, and the former was printed by Pinkerton in his *Ancient Scottish Poems* in 1786. No fewer than five MSS. of the translation of the *Aeneid* have come down to modern times. Of these, one in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, written about 1525, claims to be the "first correck copy nixt eftir the Translatioun wryttin be Master Matho Geddes" the Bishop's chaplain, and it has some marginal notes in Douglas's own writing. The Elphinstoun MS., used by Mr. Small, and the Ruthven MS., which belonged to the ill-fated Earl of Gowrie, are in the University Library, Edinburgh. There is a manuscript at Lambeth Palace, and one is preserved in the library of the Marquis of Bath at Longleate, Wilts. The first printed edition was a mutilated one by William Copland in 1553; there was the famous Edinburgh folio edited by Thomas Ruddiman in 1710; and in 1839, upon the basis of the Cambridge MS., was produced the sumptuous edition of the Bannatyne Club. The first complete edition of the poet's works, in four volumes, was edited in an entirely

satisfactory manner by Mr. John Small, M.A., in 1874.

“The Palace of Honour” is an allegorical composition in the fashion of Douglas’s time, a Gothic structure, as Dr. Irving says, in which “ancient and modern usages, classical and Christian subjects, are almost constantly blended together, and a nymph of Calliope’s train expounds the scheme of human redemption.” The poet in a garden, of a May morning, falls into a swoon and sees pass him in succession the courts of Minerva, Diana, and Venus. Venus has him seized and is about to condemn him for contumely, when the court of the Muses arrives, and upon Calliope’s intercession and his own composition of a lay in praise of the goddess of love he is set free. In the Muses’ train he visits the Castalian fount, hears recited the long roll of the deeds of ancient heroes, and at last reaches the mountain on whose summit glitters the magic palace. Close to the summit he finds his path crossed by a fearful ditch, deep as Hell, wherein, amid boiling pitch, brimstone and lead, welter those wretches who have been tempted from pursuit of honour by pleasure and sloth. Carried across by his guardian nymph, he is shown a vision first of the storm-tossed world, then of the wonderful Palace of Honour, and again, in Venus’ mirror, the most remarkable actions recorded in history. The inhabitants of the Palace are next passed in review—those who during their lives have followed the laws of truth, fidelity, and valour. The nymph then conducts him to a delightful and wonderful garden, but in attempting to gain access by

the bridge of a single tree, he falls into the moat and awakes. The composition is in a strictly conventional vein, hardly ever rising above the level of laboured prose, though the verse is full of sweetness, with an occasional vigorous touch, and there is throughout an exuberant if somewhat diffuse richness of detail. It must remain chiefly remarkable as proof of the wide classical learning of its author. (There seems ample room for the belief, moreover, that Bunyan got from the "Palace of Honour" a large part of the suggestion of his *Pilgrim's Progress*.)

"King Hart," though in the same conventional vein of allegory, exhibits riper powers than Douglas's earlier work. So vivid, indeed, sometimes become the circumstances and characters that the reader forgets the allegory, and catches fire at the story itself. The narrative is full of action, the personifications are natural and real as life, and the plot has strong human interest, while the allegory is original, consistent throughout, and forcible. In all respects this must be reckoned a greater performance than its more famous sister piece. As a study of the growth and decline of an emotion it will, behind its archaic method, bear comparison with some of the best analytical novel-writing of the present day.

But the work to which Douglas must owe his enduring fame is his latest and longest, the translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Here he was away from the fatal atmosphere of convention; the nature of the task set a bound to his discursive bent; and amid the variety of the great epic he struck at last upon the true

medium for his genius. His was the earliest metrical translation of a classic into the English or Scottish language, and its appearance, marking the dawn of the Renaissance in the north, gave the first sign that the middle ages were past. From the intrinsic beauty and worth of the performance, notwithstanding the antique language in which it appears, this must continue to rank among the greatest translations of the Augustan poet. It is true that here and there Douglas reads certain anachronisms into the classic, the Sybil becomes a nun, Æneas a "gentle baron," and so on, while at times, in portraits of men and women and in descriptions of nature, he is tempted to add deft touches of his own; but the work is that of one who knew the original language thoroughly, and who brought to its rendering an ample and richly varied phraseology of his own. Douglas's *Æneid* was the first work which carried Scottish literary influence to the south of the Tweed, and its immediate result was the Earl of Surrey's translation of the second and fourth books of the *Æneid* into English. It is a testimony to the excellence of the Scottish poet's work that Surrey embodied in his version many expressions and even whole lines of the northern translator.

To each of the twelve books of the *Æneid*, and to the additional book by Mapheus Vegius of the fifteenth century, which he included, Douglas wrote an appropriate prologue, and it is in these prologues that his finest work is seen. Here the Scottish genius for natural description appears. The colour, says Mr. Stopford Brooke, is superb, while of the landscape

of the poet he adds, "there is nothing like it in England till Thomson's *Seasons*, and Thomson was a Scotchman." Mr. Small, drawing attention to "the dreary picture of winter in the seventh prologue, the glowing description of May in the twelfth, and the beauties of an evening in June in the thirteenth," gives it as his opinion that in these are to be found "descriptive passages equal, if not superior, to any which exist in the whole range of Scottish poetry." Here are lively touches of fancy, and rural imagery homely and real, and here, at his truest and best, Douglas touches home to the heart of poetry when he speaks with his own lips of the things that his own eyes saw.

The translation was made by Douglas at the request of his cousin Lord Sinclair, and at its conclusion he bade farewell to poetry—

And will direct my labours euermoir
Vnto the common welth and Goddis gloir.

What he might have done in the nine remaining years of his life, had his resolution and his fortunes been different, it is idle to imagine. What he has done assures him, if not, indeed, a "monument more lasting than brass," at least a laurel that will live as long as the great deeds which have given lustre to the Douglas name. In "The Court of Venus," written about 1560, Rolland describes him—

Bischope and als ane honest Oratour,
Profound Poet and perfite Philosophour;
Into his days abone all buir the bell,
In sic practikis all vtheris did precell.

HONOUR.

*The "ballad," curious for its plethora of rhymes, with which
"The Palace of Honour" concludes.*



HIE Honour! sweit heuinlie flour degest¹, ¹ grave.

Gem verteous, maist precious, gudliest ;

For hie renoun thou art guerdoun condign², ² condign, fit.
Of worschip kend³ the glorious end and rest, ³ Of worth ascer-
But⁴ quhome in richt na worthie wicht may lest. ⁴ Without.

Thy greit puissance may maist auance all thing,
And powerall to mekill auail⁵ sone bring, ⁵ poor folk to
I thé requair, sen thow but peir art best, much conse-
That efter this in thy hie blis we ring⁶. ⁶ reign.

Of grace thy face in euerie place sa schynis
That sweit all spreit baith heid and feit inclynis

Thy gloir afor for till imploir remeid.

He docht⁷ richt nocht, quhilk⁸ out of thocht thé tynis⁹! ⁷ avails.
⁸ who.

Thy name but blame, and royal fame, diuine is ; ⁹ loses.

Thow port, at schort,¹⁰ of our comfort and reid¹¹ ¹⁰ gate, in short.
¹¹ counsel.

Till bring all thing till glaiding efter deid ;

All wicht but sicht of thy greit nicht ay crynis¹², ¹² diminishes,
shrinks.

O schene¹³ I mene¹⁴ nane may sustene thy feid¹⁵. ¹³ shining one.
¹⁴ bemoan.

¹⁵ feud.

Haill, rois maist chois til clois thy fois greit micht!
 Haill, stone quhilk schone vpon the throne of licht!

Vertew, quhais trew sweit dew ouirthrew al vice,
 Was ay ilk day gar¹ say the way of licht,
 Amend, offend, and send our end ay richt!

¹ Was always
 each day
 causing.

Thow stant, ordant as sanct, of grant maist wise
 Till be supplie², and the hie gre³ of price.

² succour.
³ degree, prize.

⁴ Extend thee
 soon to wipe
 me quit of
 shame.

Delite thé tite me quite of site to dicht⁴,
 For I apply schortlie to thy deuise.

KING HART.

[King Hart, personifying the heart of man, is represented in the pride of youth, guarded in his seemly castle by the five senses, and attended by a court of youthful qualities, such as Strength and Wantonness.]

KING HART into his cumlie castell strang

Closit about with craft and meikill vre¹,

¹ much labour.

So semlie wes he set his folk amang

That he no dout had of misaventure ;

So prouddie wes he polist, plane and pure,

With youthheid and his lustie levis grene,

So fair, so fresche, so liklie to endure,

And als so blyth as bird in symmer schene.

For wes he never yit with schouris schot²,

² with sorrows
assailed.

Nor yet ourrun with rouk³ or ony rayne :

³ over-run with
moisture.

In all his lusty lecam⁴ nocht ane spot,

⁴ his fair body.

Na never had experience into payne ;

Bot alway into lyking, nocht to layne⁵,

⁵ in pleasure, to
say truth, *dit.*
not to lie.

Onlie to love and verrie gentilnes

He wes inclynit cleinlie to remane

And wonn⁶ vnder the wyng of Wantownness.

⁶ dwell.

[Close by stands the delightful palace of Dame Pleasance, and one day surrounded by her handmaids, Beauty, Kindness, Mirth, and others, she appears with all her forces near the castle of King Hart. Alarm is brought by the watchmen to the hall where the king is sitting, whereupon]

- ¹ hooked. Youthheid vpstart and cleikit¹ on his cloik,
² broidered. Was browdin² all with lustie levis grene;
³ soak, rest. "Ryse, Fresche Delyte! lat nocht this mater soke³;
 We will go se quhat may this muster mene.
⁴ share. So weill we sall ws it copé⁴ betwene,
 Thair sall nothing pas away vnspyt;
⁵ Afterwards. Syn⁵ sall we tell the king as we have sene,
 And thar sall nothing trewlie be denyit."

- Youthheid furth past, and raid on Innocence,
 Ane mylk-quhyt steid that ambilit as the wynd;
 And Fresche Delyt raid on Benevolence,
⁶ abide. Throw-out the meid that wald nocht byd⁶ behind.
 The bernes bricht almost had maid thame blind
 That fra fresche Bewtie spred vnder the cloude.
⁷ made way. To hir thay socht⁷, and sone thai culd hir find;
 No saw thai nane never wes half sa proude.

- ⁸ barons. The bernis⁸ both wes basit of the sicht,
⁹ marred in mood, And out of mesour marrit in thair mude⁹:
 disconcerted.
¹⁰ on white steeds As spreitles folkis on blonkis hvffit on hicht¹⁰
 paused on high.
 Both in ane studie starand still thai stude.
¹¹ went. Fayr-Calling freschlie on hir wayis yuid¹¹
 And both thair reynyeis cleikit in hir handis,
¹² mad. Syn to hir castell raid as scho war woude¹²,
 And festnit vp thir folkis in Venus' bandis.

[Other messengers whom the king sends out are captured in turn, and at last he himself, exasperated, issues forth to fight. Pleasance then arranges her troops in order of battle, and, defeating and wounding the king, casts him into a dungeon in her palace. Here his malady is made worse by the fact that from his dungeon he can see and hear the mirth in the queen's hall. Meanwhile Jealousy and Prodigality are his attendants].

Discretioun wes as than bot young of age,
 He sleipit with Lust quhair-euer he micht him find :
 And he agane wes crabbit at the page.
 Ane ladill full of luif, stude him behind,
 He swakit in his ene¹ and maid him blinde.

¹ dashed into his eyes.

[Business, Noble Bearing, and Disport strive to make interest with Dame Pleasance, but, laughing, she bids them attend their master. Presently, however, the imprisoned courtiers of King Hart make fatal interest with one of the queen's handmaids.]

This wourthy King in presoun thus culd ly
 With all his folk, and culd thair nane out brek.
 Full oft thai kan vpone Dame Pietie cry,
 "Fair thing! cum doun a quhyle and with ws speik.
 Cum! farar² way ye micht your harmes wreik³
 Than thus to murdour ws that yoldin ar.
 Wald ye ws rew, quhair-euir we micht our reik⁴
 We suld men be to yow for euirmare."

² A further, another.
³ your hurts avenge.

⁴ reach over, attain to.

Than answerit Danger and said, "That were grete doute,
 A madin sweit amang sa mony men
 To cum alane, but⁵ folk war hir about ;
 That is ane craft myself culd never ken⁶."
 With that scho ran vnto the Lady kene⁷;
 Kneland, "Madame," scho said, "keip Pietie fast!
 Sythen⁸ scho ask, no licence to her len⁹.
 May scho wyn¹⁰ out scho will play yow a cast¹¹."

⁵ unless.
⁶ a trick I could never take cognizance of.
⁷ intrepid.

⁸ Although.
⁹ lend.
¹⁰ get.
¹¹ trick.

[Alas! then came a night when Danger slept.]

The dure on chare it stude ; all wes on sleip ;
 And Pietie doun the stair full sone is past.
 This Bissines hes sene, and gave gud keip¹²;
 Dame Pietie hes he hint¹³ in armeis fast.

¹² heed.

¹³ seized.

He callit on Lust, and he come at the last ;
¹ caused. His bandis gart¹ he birst in peces smale :
 Dame Pietie wes gritlie feirit and agast.
 Be that wes Confort croppin in our the wall.

[King Hart and his court, set free, proceed to storm the palace, and at last the queen, reduced to straits, throws herself upon his courtesy.]

So sweit ane swell as straik vnto his hart
 Quhen that he saw Dame Plesance at his will.
² make me not. " I yeild me, schir ! and do me nocht² to smart !"
³ I saved your (life), though it be no argument. The fayr Quene said vpon this wyss him till.
 " I sauf youris, suppois it be no skill³.
 All that I haue, and all that myne may be,
 With all my hairt I offer heir yow till,
 And askis nocht bot ye be trew till me."

Till that [quhilk] Loue, Desyre, and Lust devysit
 Thus fair Dame Plesance sweetlie can assent.
 Than suddandlie Schir Hart him now disgysit,
⁴ ere ever he stretched. On gat his amouris clok or euer he stent⁴.
 Freschlie to feist thir amouris folk ar went.
⁵ as messenger. Blythnes wes first brocht bodwarde⁵ to the hall :
 Dame Chastite, that selie innocent,
⁶ went mad, and flew out over. For wo yeid wode, and flaw out our⁶ the wall.

The lustie Quene, scho sat in middes the deiss ;
 Befoir hir stude the nobill wourthy King.
⁷ messes. Servit thai war of mony diuerss meiss⁷,
⁸ savours. Full sawris⁸ sweit and swyth⁹ thai culd thame bring.
⁹ quickly.

Thus thai maid ane [richt] mirrie marschalling;
 Bewtie and Loue ane hait burde¹ hes begun; ¹ a hot tussle.
 In wirschip of that lustie feist so ding² ² worthy.
 Dame Plesance has gart perce Dame Venus' tun.

[The second canto paints a sadder picture. Seven years of wedded bliss have flown, when one morning a stranger, Age, knocks at the gate.]

At morrowing tyde, quhen at³ the sone so schene⁴ ^{3 that.}
^{4 fair.}

Out raschit⁵ had his bemis frome the sky, 5 dashed.
Ane auld gude-man befor the yet⁶ was sene, 6 gate.

Apone ane seid that raid full easalie.
 He rappit at the yet, but courtaslie,
 Yit at the straik the grit dungeoun can din⁷;
 Syne at the last he schowted fellonlie⁸,
 And bad thame rys, and said he wald cum in.

⁷ the donjon-tower resounded.
⁸ violently.

Sone Wantownnes come to the wall abone⁹, 9 above.

And cryit our¹⁰, "Quhat folk are ye thair out?" ¹⁰ over.

“My name is Age,” said he agane full sone,

“May thow nocht heir? Langar how I culd schout!”

“What war your will?” “I will come in, but dout.”

“Now God forbid ! In fayth ye cum nocht heir !

Rin on thy way, [or] thow sall beir ane routeⁱⁱ, ⁱⁱ blow.

And say the portar he is wonder sweir¹².”

[At this news the courtiers begin to take flight. Youthheid is the first to go; and here, says Merry Ross, "even allegory cannot chill the tenderness of the king's farewell."]

“Sen thou man pas¹³, fair Youthheid, wa is me ! ¹³ Since thou
must go.

Thow wes my freynd, and maid me gude seruice.

Fra thow be went never so blyth to be

I mak ane vow, [al]thocht that it be nyce¹⁴. ¹⁴ foolish.

¹ prize.² reward.³ ere thou go.⁴ with skill.⁵ desire.⁶ take.

Of all blythnes thy bodie beiris the pryce¹.

To warisoun² I gif thé, or thow ga³,

This fresche visar, wes payntit at devyce⁴.

My lust⁵ alway with thé se that thow ta⁶.

“For saik of thé I will no colour reid

Nor lusty quhyte vpone my bodie beir,

⁷ till.

Bot blak and gray; alway, quhill⁷ I be deid,

I will none vther wantoun wedis weir.

⁸ hurt.

Fayr-weill, my freynd! Thow did me never deir⁸.

Vnwelcum Age, thow come agane my will!

I lat thé wit I micht thé weill forbeir.

⁹ without argu-
ment, *i.e.* in-
deed.

Thy warisoun suld be [richt] small but skill⁹.”

[After Age enter Conscience, Reason, and Wit. Reason removes the film from the eyes of Discretion, and reads aloud the conditions of his own service.]

Ressoun rais vp, and in his rollis he brocht.

“Gif I sall say, the sentence sall be plane;

¹⁰ hurt thee
aught.

Do never the thing that ever may scayth thé ocht¹⁰;

¹¹ snare.

Keip mesour and trouth, for thairin lyes na trayne¹¹.

Discretioun suld ay with King Hart remane.

Thir vthir young folk-seruandis ar bot fulis.

¹² makes.

Experience mais¹² Knowlege now agane,

¹³ children.

And barnis¹³ young suld lerne at auld mennis sculis.

¹⁴ tastes.

“Quha gustis¹⁴ sweit, and feld nevir of the sowre,

¹⁵ seasoning.

Quhat can [he] say? How may he seasoun¹⁵ juge?

Quha sittis hate, and feld nevir cauld ane hour,

¹⁶ outside under
the lodge.

Quhat wedder is thairout vnder the luge¹⁶

How suld he wit? That war ane mervale huge ! I know.

To by richt blew², that nevir ane hew had sene! ² To buy true
blue.

Ane servand be, that nevir had sene ane fuge³! 3 bundle.

Suppois it ryme it accordis nocht all clene.

“To wiss⁴ the richt and to disvse the wrang,

4 understand.

That is my scule to all that list to leyr⁵."

5 that choose to
learn.

[But as the lighter courtiers, Strength, Worth in War, and the rest, depart, Dame Pleasance herself grows cold to the king, his caresses become irksome, and at last she bids him farewell. Then King Hart returns to his own castle, kept by Heaviness. Here, before long, he is besieged by the forces of Decrepitude, led by Headache, Cough, and Palsy; and finally, being mortally wounded, he prepares for death by making his will and testament.]

DIDO'S HUNTING PARTY.

From the Fourth Book of the Æneid.

BE this the queyn with havy thochtis onsound
In every vane nurisis the greyn wound.
Smyttin so deip with the blynd fyre of lufe,
Hir trublitt mynd gan fro all rest remufe.
Compasing the gret prowes of Enee,

¹ The great worth
many times.

² imprinted.

³ might.

⁴ Æneas.

⁵ place, steadin.

⁶ erstwhile.

The large wirschip feill syse¹ remembris sche
Of his lynage and folkis; for ay present
Deip in hir breist so wes his figur prent²
And all his wordis fixt, that, for besy thocht,
None eis hir membris nor quyete suffir mocht³.

Sum-tyme the quene Enee⁴ with hir did leid
Throw-out the wallis onto euery steid⁵,
The tresour all and riches of Sydony
Schawing to him; and offerit all reddy
The cetie of Cartage at his commandment.
Begyn scho wald to tell furth hir intent,
And in the myd word stop and hald hir still
And quhen the evin coyme it wes hir will
To seik wayis hym to feist, as sche did air⁶,
And, half myndles, agane sche langis sair

For tyll inquyre and heir the sege of Troy,
 And in a stair¹ behaldis hym for joy. ¹ gaze.
 Eftir all wes voydit, and the lycht of day
 Ay mair and mair the mone quencht away,
 And the declyning of the sternis brycht² ² the bright stars.
 To sleip and rest perswadis euery wycht,
 Within her chalmer allane scho langis sair,
 And thoct all waist for lak of hir lufair.
 Amyd ane woid bed scho hir laid adoun,
 And of him absent thinkis scho heris the soun³; ³ sound.
 His voce scho heris, and him behaldis sche,
 Thoct⁴ he, God wait, fer from her presence be. ⁴ Though.
 And sum-tyme wald scho Ascanius, the page,
 Caucht⁵ in the figur of his faderis ymage ⁵ Catch.
 And in hir bosum brace, gif scho tharby
 The luif vntellable mycht swyk⁶ or satisfy. ⁶ assuage.
 The werk and wallis begovn ar nocht upbrocht;
 The younkeris deidis of armes exercis nocht;
 Nodir⁷ fortreis nor turratis suir of weir⁸ ⁷ Neither.
⁸ sure turrets of war.
 Now graith⁹ thai mair; for all the werk, but weir, ⁹ prepare.
 Cessis and is stoppit, baith of pynnakles hye
 And byg towris, semyt to ryse in the skye.*

Furth of the see, with this, the dawning springis.
 As Phebus rais, fast to the yettis thringing¹⁰ ¹⁰ eagerly to the gates throng.
 The chois galandis, and huntmen thaim besyde
 With ralis and with nettis strang and wyde
 And hunting speris stif with hedis braid.

* Each book of the *Aeneid* was divided by Douglas into chapters, and the two passages above, descriptive of Dido's passion, are included from the first and second chapters of Book IV. as introducing the incidents of the hunt in chapter four.

- From Massylyne horsmen thik thiddir raid,
 With rynning hundis, a full huge sort,
¹ tarrying at the gate. Noblis of Cartage, hovand at the port¹,
 The quene awatis that lang in chalmer dwellis.
 Hir fers steid stude stamping, reddy ellis,
² champing. Rungeand² the fomy goldin bitt jingling,
 Of goldin pall wrocht his riche harnissing.
 And scho, at last, of palice ischit out,
³ company. With huge menze³ walking hir about ;
⁴ embroidered. Lappit in ane brusit⁴ mantill of Sydony,
⁵ twisted. With gold and perle the bordour all bewry⁵,
⁶ quiver. Hingand by hir syde the cais⁶ with arrowis ground ;
 Hir brycht tressis envelopit war and wound
⁷ coif, hood. Intill a kuafe⁷ of fyne gold wyrin threid ;
⁸ purple attire. The goldin buttoun claspit hir purpour weid⁸.
 And furth scho passit with all hir company.
- ⁹ gathered about. The Troiane peple forgadderit⁹ by and by
 Joly and glaid the fresche Ascanius ying ;
 Bot first of all, most gudlie, hym-self, thar king
¹⁰ without doubt. Enee, gan entir in falloschip, but dout¹⁰,
¹¹ joined. And vnto thaim adiony¹¹ his large rowt.
 Lyk quhen Apollo list depart or ga
 Furth of his wintring realm of Lisia
 And leif the flude Exanthus for a quhile,
¹² visit. To vesy¹² Delos his moderis land and ile,
 Renewand ringis and dancis, mony a rowt,
 Mixt togiddir, his altaris standing abowt,
 The peple of Crete and thaim of Driopes
 And eik the payntit folkis Agathirces,
¹³ guise, manner. Schowtand on ther gise¹³ with clamour and vocis hie,

Apon thi top, Mont Cynthus, walkis he,
 His wavand haris, sum-tyme, doing down thring¹
 With a soft garland of lawrere² sweit smelling,
 And wmquhile³ thaim gan balmyng and anoynt
 And into gold addres at full gude poynt⁴;
 His grundin dartis clattering by his syde,
 Als fresch, als lusty⁵ did Eneas ryde,
 With als gret bewtie in his lordlie face.

¹ thronging
down.
² laurel.
³ formerly.
⁴ in good order.
⁵ desirable.

And eftir thai ar cumin to the chace,
 Amang the montanis in the wild forrest,
 The ryning hundis of cuplis sone thai kest,
 And our the clewis and the holtis belyf⁶
 The wild bestis down to the daill thai drive.
 Lo, ther the rais⁷, rynning swyft as fyre,
 Drevin from the hychtis⁸ brekkis out at the swyre⁹.
 Ane-vther part, syne¹⁰ yonder mycht thow see
 The hirdis of hartis, with ther heidis hie,
 Ourspyennerand¹¹ with swyft cours the plane vail,
 The hepe of dust wpstouring¹² at thair taill,
 Fleand the hundis, leiffand the hie montanis.
 And Ascanyus, the child, amyde the planis,
 Joyus and blyth, his sterling¹³ steid to assay,
 Now makkis his renk¹⁴ yondir, and now this way,
 Now prekis furth by thir and now by thaim¹⁵,
 Langing, amang faynt frayit¹⁶ beistis vntame,
 The fomy bair down from the hillis hycht,
 Or the dun lyon descend recontir he mycht.

⁶ over the dells
and the woods
quickly.
⁷ roes.
⁸ heights.
⁹ gorge.
¹⁰ presently.
¹¹ fleeting over.
¹² upstouring.
¹³ restless.
¹⁴ course.
¹⁵ by these and
those.
¹⁶ affrighted.

In the meyn-quhile the hevinnis all about
 With fellon noyis gan to rummyll and rowt¹⁷;

¹⁷ roar.

- ¹ blast. A bub¹ of weddir followit in the tail,
² mixed. Thik schour of rane myddillit² full of hail.
³ scatters far and near. The Tyrian menye skalis wydequhair³
 And all the galandis of Troy fled heir and thair,
 And eik with thaim the yong Ascanius,
 Nevo to King Dardane and to Venus.
⁴ places. For feir to diuers stedis⁴ throw the feildis
⁵ corners and shelters. Thai seik to haldis, housis, hirmis, and beildis⁵.
⁶ suddenly. The riveris rudlie ruschit our hillis bedene⁶.
 Within a cave is enterit Dido queyn,
 And eik the Troiane duke, all thaim allane,
 By aventure as thai eschewit the rane.
 Erth, the first modir, maid a takin of wo,
 And eik of wedlok the pronuba⁷ Juno,
⁷ marriage-goddess. And of thair cupling wittering schew the air⁸;
⁸ the air showed knowledge. The flamb of fyreflaucht⁹ lychnyt heir and thar,
⁹ lightning. And on the hillis hie toppes, but les¹⁰,
¹⁰ without lies, in truth. Sat murnyng nymphis, hait¹¹ Oreades.
¹¹ named. This was the foremast day of hir glaidnes
 And first morow of hir wofull distres ;
¹² fashion. For nother the fassoun¹² nor the maner sche
 Attendis now, nor fame, ne honestie,
 Nor from thens-furthwart Dido ony moir
 Musis on luif, secret, as of befor,
¹³ calls. Bot clepis¹³ it spousage, and with that fair name
 Clokit and hyd hir cryme of oppyne schame.

WINTER.

Prologue to the Seventh Book of the Æneid.

As brycht Phebus, schene souerane¹, hevynnis e,
The opposit held of his chymmis hie²,
Cleir schynand bemys, and goldin symmeris hew,
In lattoun³ colour altering haill⁴ of new,
Kithing no syng⁵ of heyt be his visage,
So neir approchit he his wynter staige;
Redy he was to entir the thrid morne
In cloudy skyis vndir Capricorne.
All-thocht⁶ he be the hart and lamp of hevin
Forfeblit wolx his lemand giltly lewyne⁷
Throw the declyning of his large round speir.
The frosty regioun ringis⁸ of the yeir,
The tyme and sessoune bitter cald and pail,
Thai schort days that clerkis clepe brumail.
Quhen brym⁹ blastis of the northyne art¹⁰
Ourquhelmit had Neptunus in his cart,
And all to schaik the levis of the treis,
The rageand storm ourwalterand wally seis¹¹,
Reveris ran reid on spait¹² with watter broune,
And burnis hurlis all thair bankis downe,
And landbrist rumland rudely wyth sic beir¹³,

¹ shining sove-
reign.

² mansions high.

³ mixed metal,
prob. brass.

⁴ wholly.

⁵ Showing no
sign.

⁶ Although.

⁷ Very feeble
waxed his
glowing gilded
levin.

⁸ reigns.

⁹ fierce.

¹⁰ direction.

¹¹ over-riding
wavy seas.

¹² flood.

¹³ breakers rum-
bling with
such noise.

- So loud ne rummist wyld lioun or beir.
¹ dolphins (sea-swine) or whales. Fludis monstreis, sic as meirswyne or quhailis¹
² send down. For the tempest law in the deip devallyis².
 Mars occident, retrograide in his speir,
 Provocand stryff, regnit as lord that yeir.
 Rany Orioune wyth his stormy face
 Bewalit of the schipman by his rays,
³ Untoward. Frawart³ Saturne, chill of complexioun,
 Throw quhais aspect derth and infectioun
 Bene causit oft, and mortale pestilens,
⁴ the degrees of his ascent. Went progressiue the greis of his ascens⁴;
 And lusty Hebe, Junois douchtir gay,
⁵ spoiled. Stud spulyeit⁵ of hir office and array.
⁶ soaked in water moist. The soill ysowpit into wattir wak⁶,
⁷ mists. The firmament ourkest with rokis⁷ blak,
⁸ dun grew. The ground fadyt, and fauch wolx⁸ all the feildis,
⁹ covered smooth with snow. Montayne toppis sleikit wyth snaw ourheildis⁹,
 On raggit rolkis of hard harsk quhyne stane
¹⁰ stony cliffs shone. With frosyne frontis cauld clynty clewis schane¹⁰.
 Bewtie wes lost, and barrand schew the landis
 With frostis haire ourfret the feildis standis.
¹¹ blasts. Soure bittir bubbis¹¹ and the schowris snell¹²
¹² piercing. Semyt on the sward ane similitude of hell,
 Reducyng to our mynd, in every steid,
 Goustly schaddois of eild and grisly deid,
¹³ Thick foggy shadows darkened. Thik drumly scuggis dirknit¹³ so the hevyn.
¹⁴ threw. Dym skyis oft furth warpit¹⁴ feirfull levyne,
¹⁵ cruel blasts. Flaggis of fyir, and mony felloun flawe¹⁵,
¹⁶ showers. Scharp soppis¹⁶ of sleit and of the snyband¹⁷ snawe.
¹⁷ biting. The dowy¹⁸ dichis war all donk and wait,
¹⁸ dreary. The law vaille flodderit all wyth spait¹⁹,
¹⁹ flooded with torrent.

The plane streits and every hie way
 Full of fluschis, doubbis, myre, and clay.
 Lagerit leys wallowit¹ farnys schewe,
 Broune muris kithit thair wysnit² mossy hewe,
 Bank, bra, and boddum³ blanschit wolx and bair,
 For gurl⁴ weddir growyt bestis haire.
 The wynd maid wayfe⁵ the reid weyd on the dyk;
 Bedovin in donkis deyp wes every syk⁶.
 Our craggis and the front of rochis seyre⁷
 Hang gret isch-schoklis lang as ony spere.
 The grund stude barrand, widderit, dosk, and gray;
 Herbis, flouris, and gersis wallowit away⁸.
 Woddis, forestis, wyth nakyt bewis blout⁹,
 Stud strypt of thair weyd in every hout¹⁰,
 So bustuysly¹¹ Boreas his bugill blew,
 The deyr full dern¹² down in the dalis drew.
 Smal byrdis, flokand throw thik ronnis¹³ thrang,
 In chyrmyng and with cheping¹⁴ changit thair sang,
 Sekand hidlis and hirnys¹⁵ thaim to hyde
 Fra feirfull thudis of the tempestuus tyde.
 The wattir lynnys routtis¹⁶, and euey lynde¹⁷
 Quhyslyt and brayt of the swouchand¹⁸ wynde.
 Puire laboraris and byssy husband men
 Went wayt and wery draglyt in the fen.
 The silly scheip and thair lytill hyrd gromis
 Lurkis vndir le of bankis, wodys, and bromys;
 And wthir dantit¹⁹ gretar bestial
 Within thair stabillis sesyt²⁰ into stall,
 Sic as mulis, horsis, oxin, and ky²¹,
 Fed tuskit baris, and fat swyne in sty,
 Sustenit war by mannys gouernance

¹ Bemired leas
withered.

² showed their
withered.

³ bottom.

⁴ stormy.

⁵ wave.

⁶ rill.

⁷ many.

⁸ grasses
withered away.

⁹ boughs bare.

¹⁰ wood (holt).

¹¹ rudely.

¹² secretly.

¹³ shrubs.

¹⁴ twittering and
chirping.

¹⁵ hiding-places
and corners.

¹⁶ roar.

¹⁷ lime-tree.

¹⁸ soughing.

¹⁹ daunted.

²⁰ secured.

²¹ kine.

- On hervist and on symmeris purviance.
¹ far and near. Widequhair¹ with fors so Eolus schouttis schyll²
² shrill. In this congelit sessioun scharp and chyll,
³ cool. The callour³ air, penetrative and puire,
⁴ Dazing, stupe- Dasyng⁴ the bluide in every creature,
 fying.
⁵ genial hot fires. Maid seik warm stovis and beyne fyris hoyt⁵,
⁶ under-vest. In double garmont cled and wyly-coyt⁶,
 Wyth mychty drink and meytis confortive,
 Agayne the stormé wyntre for to strive.
- ⁷ Refreshed. Repaterit⁷ weill and by the chymnay beykyt⁸
⁸ basked.
⁹ stretched. At evin be tyme dovne a bed I me streikit⁹,
¹⁰ Wrapped. Warpit¹⁰ my heid, kest on claythis thrinfauld,
 For till expell the perrellus peirsand cauld.
- ¹¹ then prepared. I crocit me, syne bownit¹¹ for to sleip
¹² heed. Quhair, lemand throw the glas, I did tak keip¹²
 Latonia, the lang irksun nycht,
¹³ glances. Hir subtell blenkis¹³ sched and wattry lycht
 Full hie wp quhyrlyt in hir regioun,
 Till Phebus rycht in oppositioun,
 Into the Crab hir propir mansioun draw,
 Haldand the hycht allthocht the son went law.
 Hornit Hebawde, quhilk clepe we the nycht owle,
 Within hir caverne hard I schout and yowle.
- ¹⁴ distorted. Laithlie of forme, wyth crukit camschow¹⁴ beik,
¹⁵ horrible. Vgsum¹⁵ to heir was hir wyld elriche¹⁶ screik.
¹⁶ uncanny. The wyld geis claking eik by nyctis tyde
¹⁷ Over. Attoure¹⁷ the citie fleand hard I glyde.
- ¹⁸ grave, deep. On slumyr I slaid full sad¹⁸, and slepit sownd
 Quhill the oriyont wpwart gan rebound.

Phebus' crownit byrd, the nyctis orloger,
 Clappand his wyngis thryse had crawin cleir.
 Approching neir the greiking¹ of the day,
 Wythin my bed I waikynnit quhair I lay.
 So fast declinis Synthea the mone,
 And kais keklis² on the ruiff abone³.
 Palamedes byrdis crouping in the sky,
 Fleand on randoune⁴ schapin lik ane Y,
 And as ane trumpat rang thair vocis soun,
 Quhais cryis bene prognostication
 Off wyndy blastis and ventositeis.
 Fast by my chalmir, in heych wysnit treis⁵,
 The soir gled⁶ quhislis loud wyth mony ane pew,
 Quhairby the day was dawin, weil I knew.
 Bad beit the fyre, and the candill alycht,
 Syne blissit me, and, in my wedis dycht,
 Ane schot-wyndo⁷ vnschet a lytill on char,
 Persawit the mornying bla, wan, and har⁸,
 Wyth cloudy gum and rak⁹ ourquhelmit the air,
 The soulye stythlie hasart, rowch, and hair¹⁰,
 Branchis brattlyng, and blayknit schew the brays¹¹,
 With hyrstis harsk of waggand wyndilstrays¹²,
 The dew-droppis congelyt on stybill and rynd,
 And scharp hailstanis, mortfundit¹³ of kynd,
 Hoppand on the thak and on the causay¹⁴ by.
 The schot I clossit and drew inwart in hy¹⁵,
 Chiverand for cauld, the sessoun was so snell,
 Schup¹⁶ with hait flambe to fleme¹⁷ the fresyng fell,
 And as I bownit¹⁸ me to the fyre me by
 Bayth wp and downe the hous I did aspy,
 And seand Virgill on ane lettrune¹⁹ stand,

¹ grayng, dawn.² daws cackle.
³ above.⁴ in flight.⁵ high withered
trees.⁶ sorrel hawk.⁷ A projected
window.⁸ livid, wan, and
grey.⁹ mist and cloud.¹⁰ The soil hard-
frosted, misty,
and gray.¹¹ bleak appeared
the hills.¹² bare spots
rough with
wagging dried
grasses.¹³ cold as death.¹⁴ thatch and
causeway.¹⁵ in haste.¹⁶ addressed me.
¹⁷ drive away.¹⁸ addressed.¹⁹ writing table.

- ¹ seized. To writ anone I hynt¹ ane pen in hand,
For till performe the poet grave and sad,
- ² ere then. Quham sa fer furth, or than², begun I had,
³ became annoyed some-
what. And wolx ennoyit sum-deyll³ in my hart,
Thair restit vncompleteittit so gret ane part,
And til myself I said in guid effect,
- ⁴ must. "Thow man⁴ draw forth, the yok lysis on thi nek."
Wythin my mynd compasing thocht I so,
"Na-thing is done quhill ocht remanis to do."
- ⁵ chance. For byssines quhilk occurrit on cace⁵
- ⁶ Overturned. Ourvoluit⁶ I this volume lay ane space,
⁷ though.
⁸ chose. And, thocht⁷ I wery was, me lyst⁸ nocht tyre,
⁹ to leave over. Full laith to leve our⁹ werk swa in the myre,
¹⁰ stop. Or yit to stynt¹⁰ for byttir storme or rane.
Heyr I assayit to yok our pleuch agane,
- ¹¹ one-fold,
honest. And, as I culd, with afauld¹¹ diligence
This nixt buike following of profund sentence
Has thus begoune in the chyll wyntir cauld,
¹² out-field and
in-field. Quhen frostis days ourfret bayth fyrth and fauld¹².

MORNING IN MAY.

*Prologue to the Twelfth Book of the Æneid.**

DYONEA, nycht hyrd, and wach of day,
The starnis chasit of the hevin away,
Dame Cynthea down rolling in the see,
And Venus lost the bewte of hir e,
Fleand eschamyt within Cylenyus cave.
Mars onbydrew¹ for all his grundin glave²,
Nor frawart³ Saturn, from his mortall speyr,
Durst langar in the firmament appeir,
Bot stall abak yond in his regioun far,
Behynd the circulat warld of Jupiter.
Nycthemyne, affrayit of the lycht,
Went vndir covert, for gone was the nycht,
As fresch Aurora, to mychty Tythone spous,
Ischit of hir safron bed and evir⁴ hous
In crammysin⁵ cled and granit violat,
With sanguyne cape and selvage purpurat⁶,
Onschot the windois of hyr large hall,
Spred all wyth rosys and full of balm ryall,
And eik the hevinly portis crystallyne

¹ withdrew.

² sharpened sword.

³ untoward.

⁴ ivory.

⁵ cramoisie, crimson cloth.

⁶ purple edge.

* In 1752 two English versions of this prologue appeared, one in the *Scots' Magazine* by Jerome Stone, schoolmaster of Dunkeld, and another by Francis Fawkes. Of the latter, Mr. Small quotes two fine passages in his introduction to Douglas. Warton also gives a prose paraphrase of the prologue in his *History of English Poetry*.

- ¹ Opened up wide. Vpwarpis braid¹, the warld to illumyn.
The twinkling stremowris of the orient
- ² sprays, streaks. Sched purpoure sprangis² with gold and asure ment ,
³ mingled.
- ⁴ rampart. Persand the sabill barmkyn⁴ nocturnall,
⁵ screen wall. Bet doun the skyis clowdy mantill wall⁵.
Eous the steid with ruby hamis reid
Abuf the seyis lyftis furth his heid
- ⁶ sorrel, reddish. Of cullour soyr⁶, and sum-deill brovn as berry,
For to alichtyn and glaid our emyspery,
⁷ nostrils. The flambe owtbrastyng at his neys-thyrlys⁷.
Sa fast Phaeton wyth the quhip him quhirlys
To roll Apollo his faderis goldin chair
That schrowdyth all the hevynnis and the ayr,
⁸ Till. Quhill⁸ schortly, with the blesand torch of day,
⁹ Habited. Abilyeit⁹ in his lemand¹⁰ fresch array,
¹⁰ flaming. Furth of hys palyce ryall ischyt Phebus
Wyth goldin crown and vissage gloryus,
Crysp hairis, brycht as chrysolite or topace,
For quhais hew mycht nane behald his face,
The fyry sparkis brastyng fra his ene
To purge the ayr and gylt the tendyr grene,
¹¹ Pouring out. Defundand¹¹ from hys sege¹² etheriall
¹² seat.
¹³ heavenly. Glaid influent aspectis celicall¹³
Before his regale hie magnificens
- ¹⁴ incense. Mysty vapour vpspringand, sweit as sens¹⁴,
¹⁵ clouds. In smoky soppis¹⁵ of donk dewis wak¹⁶
¹⁶ wet.
- ¹⁷ Moist whole-some vapours covering the valley. Moich hailsum stovis ourheildand the slak¹⁷.
The aureat fanys¹⁸ of hys trone souerane
¹⁸ The golden vanes. With glytrand glans oursprede the occiane,
The large fludis lemand all of lycht
¹⁹ glance. Bot with a blenk¹⁹ of his supernale sycht.

For to behald, it was a gloir to se
 The stabillit¹ wyndis and the cawmyt see²,
 The soft sessoun, the firmament serene,
 The lowne³ illumynat air, the fyrrh amene,
 The syluer-scalit fyschis on the greit⁴
 Ourthwort⁵ cleir stremis sprynkland⁶ for the heyt,
 Wyth fynnis schynand brovn as synopar⁷,
 And chyssell talis, stowrand⁸ heyr and thar.
 The new cullour alychtnyng all the landis,
 Forgane thir stannyris⁹ schane the beryall strandis,
 Quhill the reflex of the diurnal bemis
 The bene bonkis¹⁰ kest ful of variant gleimis,
 And lusty Flora did hir blomis spreid
 Vnder the feit of Phebus sulyart¹¹ steid.
 The swardit soyll enbrovd with selcouth¹² hewis
 Wod and forest obumbrat¹³ with thar bewis,
 Quhois blissfull branchis, porturat on the grund,
 With schaddois schene schew rochis rubycund.
 Towris, turattis, kyrnellis¹⁴, pynnaclis hie
 Of kirkis, castellis, and ilke¹⁵ fair cite,
 Stude payntit, euery fyall, fane, and stage¹⁶,
 Apon the plane grund by thar awin vmbrage.
 Of Eolus north blastis havand no dreyd,
 The sulye¹⁷ spred hyr braid bosum on breid,
 Zephyrus' confortabill inspiratioun
 For till ressaue law in hyr barm¹⁸ adoun.
 The cornis croppis¹⁹ and the beris new breid²⁰
 Wyth glaidsum garmond reuesting the erd,
 So thik the plantis sprang in euery pece
 The feyldis ferleis²¹ of thar fructuus flece.
 Byssy dame Ceres and provd Pryapus,

¹ stilled.² calmed sea.³ still.⁴ sand.⁵ Athwart.⁶ darting.⁷ cinnabar.⁸ storming.⁹ Opposite this gravel.¹⁰ The pleasant banks.¹¹ glittering.¹² strange.¹³ shadowed.¹⁴ battlements.¹⁵ each.¹⁶ tower, vane, and storey.¹⁷ soil.¹⁸ bosom.¹⁹ tops.²⁰ leaf.²¹ marvel.

- Reiosyng of the planis plenteus,
¹ Furnished. Plenyst¹ sa plesand and maist propirly
 By nature nurist wondir nobilly.
 On the fertill skyrt lappis of the ground,
² Stretching broad. Streking on breid² ondyr the cirkill rovnd,
³ pleasant. The variant vestur of the venust³ vaill
⁴ turfy furrow. Schrowdis the scherald fur⁴, and euey fail⁵
⁵ sward.
⁶ leaves. Ourfret with fulyeis⁶ of figuris full diuers
⁷ dispersed. The spray bysprent with spryngand sproutis dispers⁷.
 For callour humour on the dewy nycht,
⁸ Restoring. Rendryng⁸ sum place the gers⁹ pilis thar hycht
⁹ grasses. Als far as catal, the lang symmeris day,
 Had in thar pastur eyt and knyp away;
 And blisfull blossommis in the blomyt yard
 Submittis thar hedis in the yong sonnis salfgard.
¹⁰ rampart. Ive levis rank oursprede the barmkin¹⁰ wall,
 The blomyt hawthorn cled his pikis all.
¹¹ buds. Furth of fresch burgionis¹¹ the wyne-grapis ying
 Endlang the treilyeis dyd on twystis hing.
¹² locked. The lowkyt¹² buttonis on the gemmyt treis
 Ourspredand leyvis of naturis tapestreis;
 Soft gresy verdour eftir balmy schowris
 On curland stalkis smyling to thar flowris.
 Behaldand thame sa mony diuers new,
¹³ sky-coloured. Sum pers¹³, sum pail, sum burnet¹⁴, and sum blew,
¹⁴ dark brown (brunette). Sum grece¹⁵, sum gowlis¹⁶, sum purpour, sum sangwane,
¹⁵ grey. Blanchit or brovne, fawch¹⁷ yallow mony ane,
¹⁶ rose-red. Sum hevynly cullorit in celestiall gre¹⁸,
¹⁷ reddish.
¹⁸ degree. Sum wattry hewit as the haw wally see¹⁹,
¹⁹ deep wavy sea. And sum depart²⁰ in freklys red and quhyte,
²⁰ divided. Sum brycht as gold with aureat levis lyte,

The dasy dyd on breid hir crownell¹ smail,
 And euery flour onlappit² in the dail,
 In battill gyrs burgionys the banwart³ wyld,
 The clavyr, catcluke, and the cammamyl;
 The flour-de-lice furth spred his hevinly hew,
 Flour dammes⁴, and columby blank and blew;
 Seyr⁵ downis smail on dent-de-lion sprang,
 The ying grene blomyt straberry levis amang.
 Gyp gerraflouris⁶ thar royn⁷ levys vnschet,
 Fresche prymros, and the purpour violet.
 The roys knoppis, tetand⁸ furth thar heyd,
 Gan chyp, and kyth⁹ thar vermel lippis red;
 Crysp scarlet levis sum scheddand, baith attanis
 Kest fragrant smell amynd from goldin granis.
 Hevinly lylleis, with lokerand¹⁰ toppis quhyte,
 Oppynnit and schew thar creistis redymyte¹¹,
 The balmy vapour from thar sylkyn croppis
 Distylland hailsum sugurat hunny droppis;
 And syluer schakaris¹² gan fra levis hyng
 Wyth crystal sprayngis¹³ on the verdour ying:
 The plane pulderyt¹⁴ with semely settis¹⁵ sovnd,
 Bedyt¹⁶, full of dewy peirlis rovnd,
 So that ilk burgioun, syon¹⁷, herb, and flour
 Wolx all enbalmyt of the fresch liquour,
 And bathit hait did in dulce humouris fleit¹⁸,
 Quharof the beis wrocht thar hunny sweit,
 By michty Phebus operatiounis
 In sappy subtell exalatiounis.
 Forgane¹⁹ the cummyn of this prince potent
 Redolent odour vp from rutis sprent²⁰,
 Hailsum of smell as ony spicery,

¹ spread abroad
 her coronet.
² unfolded.
³ In rank grass
 buds the bane-
 wort.

⁴ damask rose.

⁵ Many.

⁶ Dainty gilly-
 flowers.
⁷ vermilion.

⁸ rose-knobs
 peeping.
⁹ show.

¹⁰ curling.

¹¹ ornate.

¹² thin hanging
 plates.

¹³ sprays.

¹⁴ powdered.

¹⁵ shoots.

¹⁶ dipped in
 water.

¹⁷ each bud,
 shoot.

¹⁸ float.

¹⁹ Against.

²⁰ sprang.

- Tryakle, droggis, or electuary,
¹ soap (?) Seroppis, sewane¹, sugour, and synamome,
 (*Pr. savon*).
² pomade (for- Precyus invnctment, salve, or fragrant pome²,
 merly made from apples
 and lemons).
 Aromatik gummis, or ony fyne potioun,
 Must, myr, aloes, or confectioun;
 Ane paradice it semyt to draw neyr
³ These cheerful. Thyр galyart³ gardyngis and ilke greyn herbere⁴.
⁴ each green Maist amyabill walxis the amerant medis.
 arbour.
⁵ rustle. Swannys swouchis⁵ throw-out the rysp⁶ and redis,
⁶ bulrushes.
⁷ Over all these Our al thir lowys⁷ and the fludis gray
 lakes.
⁸ Seeking by Seyrsand by kynd⁸ a place quhar thai suld lay.
 nature.
⁹ stir. Phebus red fowle hys corall creist can steyr⁹,
¹⁰ stretching. Oft streking¹⁰ furth hys hekkyll, crawand cleir,
¹¹ the plants and Amyd the wortis and the rutis gent¹¹
 the delicate
 roots.
¹² Pecking. Pykland¹² his meyt in alleis quhar he went,
 Hys wifis, Toppa and Pertelok, hym by,
 As byrd al tyme that hantis¹³ bygamy.
¹³ practises.
¹⁴ peacock. The payntit povne¹⁴, pasand with plomys gym¹⁵,
¹⁵ neat. Kest vp his taill, a provd plesand quheil rym,
 Yschrowdryt in hys fedramme¹⁶ brycht and schene,
¹⁶ Dressed in Schapand¹⁷ the prent of Argus' hundreth ene.
 his feather
 covering.
¹⁷ Portraying. Amang the brounis¹⁸ of the olyve twestis¹⁹
¹⁸ brushwood. Seyr²⁰ small fowlis wirkand crafty nestis
¹⁹ branches.
²⁰ Many. Endlang the hedgeis thyk and on rank akis²¹,
²¹ oaks. Ilk byrd reiosyng with thar myrthfull makis²².
²² mates. In corneris and cleir fenystaris²³ of glas
²³ windows. Full byssely Aragne wevand was,
 To knit hyr nettis and hir wobbys sle,
²⁴ midge. Tharwith to caught the myghe²⁴ and littill fle.
²⁵ upstirs. So dusty puldyr vpstowris²⁵ in euery streyt,
²⁶ Till the crow. Quhill corby²⁶ gaspyt for the fervent heyt.

Vnder the bewys beyn¹ in lusty valis,
 Within fermans² and parkis cloys of palys,
 The bustuus bukkis rakis³ furth on raw;
 Heyrdis of hertis throw the the thyk wod schaw,
 Baith the brokettis⁴, and with brayd burnyst tyndis;
 The sprutlyt⁵ calvys sowkand the reid hyndis,
 The yong fownis followand the dun dayis,
 Kyddis skip pand throw ronnis⁶ eftir rayis.
 In lyssouris⁷ and on leys littill lammis
 Full tait and trig socht⁸ bletand to thar dammis.
 Tydy ky lowys⁹, veils by thame rynniss;
 All snog and slekyt worth thir bestis skynniss.
 On salt stremis wolx Doryda and Thetis;
 By rynnand strandis Nymphis and Naedes,
 Syk as we clepe¹⁰ wenchis and damysellis,
 In gresy gravis¹¹ wandrand by spring wellis,
 Of blomyt branchis and flowris quhite and rede
 Plettand thar lusty chaiplettis for thar hede.
 Sum sing sangis, dansis ledys, and rovndis¹²,
 Wyth vocis schill¹³, quhill all the daill resovndis.
 Quharso thai walk into thar caraling
 For amorus lays doith all the rochis ryng.
 Ane sang, "The schip salis our the salt fame
 Will bring thir merchandis and my lemman hame!"
 Sum other singis, "I wil be blyth and lycht,
 Myne hart is lent apon sa gudly wycht!"
 And thoctfull luffaris rowmys to and fro,
 To leis¹⁴ thar pane and plene¹⁵ thar joly wo
 Eftir thar gys¹⁶, now singand, now in sorow,
 With hartis pensyve, the lang symmeris morow.
 Sum ballettis lyst endyte of his lady,

¹ pleasant boughs.² enclosures.³ bold bucks range.⁴ two-year-olds.⁵ speckled.⁶ brushwood.⁷ pastures.⁸ tight and neat, made their way.⁹ kine low.¹⁰ Such as we name.¹¹ In grassy groves.¹² round (dances).¹³ clear.¹⁴ lose.¹⁵ pour forth.¹⁶ After their guise.

- ¹ entirely. Sum levis in hoip, and sum aluterly¹
 Disparyt is, and sa quyte owt of grace;
 His purgatory he fyndis in euery place.
- ² flatter and feign. To pleis his luife sum thocht to flat and fene²,
³ practise. Sum to hant³ bawdry and onlesum mene⁴;
⁴ unlawful means. Sum rownys⁵ to hys fallow, thame betwene,
⁵ whispers. Hys mery stouth and pastans⁶ lait yistrene.
⁶ stolen pleasure and pastime. Smyland sayis ane, "I couth in previte
⁷ jest. Schaw thé a bowrd⁷." "Ha, quhat be that?" quod he.
 "Quhat thing?—That moste be secret," sayd the
 tother.
- "Gude Lord! mysbeleif ye your verray brother?"
⁸ whit. "Na, neuyr a deill⁸, bot harkis quhat I wald;
 Thou mon be prevy." "Lo, my hand vphald!"
 "Than sal thou walk at evin." Quod he, "Quhiddyr?"
- ⁹ such. "In sik⁹ a place heyr west, we bayth togiddyr,
¹⁰ latter. Quhar scho so freschly sang this hyndir¹⁰ nycht;
 Do chois thé ane and I sal quynch the lycht."
- ¹¹ laughed. "I sal be thar, I hope," quod he, and lewch¹¹;
 "Ya, now I knaw the mater weill enewch."
 Thus oft dywulgat is this schamefull play,
 Na-thing according to our hailsum May,
 Bot rathyr contagius and infective,
 And repugnant that sessoun nutrytive
- ¹² tickles. Quhen new curage kytlis¹² all gentill hartis,
¹³ Seeing by nature. Seand throu kynd¹³ ilk thyng springis and revertis.
 Dame Naturis menstrualis, on that other part,
¹⁴ melody. Thayr blyssfull bay¹⁴ entonyng euery art¹⁵,
¹⁵ direction. To beyt¹⁶ thar amouris of thar nychtis baill¹⁷,
¹⁶ amend, abate. The merll, the mavys, and the nychtingale
¹⁷ sorrow. With mery notis myrthfully furth brest¹⁸,
¹⁸ burst.

Enforsing thame quha mycht do clynk it best.
 The cowschet crowdis and pirkis on the rys¹;
 The styrlyng changis diuers stevynnys nys²;
 The sparrow chymis in the wallis clyft;
 Goldspynk and lyntquhyte fordynnand the lyft³;
 The gukgo galis⁴, and so quytteris⁵ the quaill,
 Quhill ryveris rerdyt⁶ schawis and euery vail,
 And tender twystis⁷ trymlyt on the treis
 For byrdis sang and bemyng of the beis;
 In wrablis dulce⁸ of hevynly armonyis
 The larkis, lowd releschand⁹ in the skyis,
 Lovys thar lege¹⁰ with tonys curyus
 Baith to Dame Natur and the fresch Venus,
 Rendryng hie lawdis in thar obseruance,
 Quhais suguryt throtis mayd glayd hartis dans;
 And al small fowlis singis on the spray.
 "Welcum, the lord of lycht and lamp of day!
 Welcum, fostyr of tendir herbys grene!
 Welcum, quyknar of florist flowris schene!
 Welcum, support of euery rute and vane¹¹!
 Welcum, confort of alkynd fruyt and grane!
 Welcum, the byrdis beyld¹² apon the breyr!
 Welcum, maister and rewlar of the yeyr!
 Welcum, weiflar of husbandis at the plewis!
 Welcum, reparar of woddis, treis, and bewis¹³;
 Welcum, depayntar of the blomyt medis!
 Welcum, the lyfe of euery thing that spredis!
 Welcum, stourour¹⁴ of alkynd bestiall!
 Welcum be thi brycht bemys, glading all!
 Welcum celestiall myrrour and aspy,
 Atteching¹⁵ all that hantis¹⁶ sluggardy!"

¹ The ring-dove
 coos and perches
 on the twigs.
² delicate sounds.

³ make the
 heaven resound.

⁴ calls.
⁵ twitters.

⁶ made mur-
 murous.

⁷ twigs.

⁸ warbles sweet.

⁹ letting go (their
 song).

¹⁰ Praise their
 liege.

¹¹ fibre.

¹² shelter.

¹³ boughs.

¹⁴ bestirrer, ruler.

¹⁵ Reproving.
¹⁶ practise.

- And with this word, in chalmer quhair I lay,
 The nynt morow of fresche, temperat May,
 On fut I sprent¹ into my bayr sark²,
 Wilfull for till compleyt my langsum³ wark
 Twichand the lattyr buke of Dan Virgill,
 Quhilk me had tareyt al to lang a quhile,
 And to behald the cummyng of this kyng⁴
 That was sa welcum tyll all warldly thyng,
 With sic tryumphe and pompos curage glayd,
 Than of his souerane chymmis⁵, as is sayd,
 Newly arissyn in hys estayt ryall,
 That, by hys hew, but orleger⁶ or dyall,
 I knew it was past four houris of day,
 And thocht I wald na langar ly in May
 Les Phebus suld me losanger⁷ attaynt.
 For Progne had or than⁸ sung hyr complaynt,
 And eik hir dreidful systir Philomene
 Hir lais endit, and in woddis grene
 Hyd hir-selvin, eschamyt of hyr chance⁹;
 And Esacus completis his pennance
 In riveris, fludis, and on euery laik;
 And Peristera byddis luffaris awaik.
 "Do serve my lady Venus heyr with me!
 Lern thus to mak your obseruance," quod she.
 "Into myne hartis ladeis sweit presens
 Behaldis how I beinge¹⁰ and do reuerens."
 Hir nek scho wrinklis, trasing mony fold,
 With plomis glitterand, asur apon gold,
 Rendring a cullour betwix grene and blew
 In purpours glans of hevinly variant hew.
 I meyn our awin native bird, gentill dow,

¹ sprang.² shirt.³ tedious.⁴ i.e. the sun.⁵ mansions.⁶ without clock.⁷ sluggard.⁸ ere then.⁹ See *Kingis Quair*, p. 38.¹⁰ bow.

Syngand in hyr kynd "I come hidder to wow,"
So pryklyng hyr grene curage for to crowd¹
In amorus voce and wowar soundis lowd,
That, for the dynning of hir wanton cry,
I irkyt of my bed and mycht nocht ly,
Bot gan me blys, syne in my wedis dres,
And, for it was ayr morow, or tyme of mes²,
I hynt a scriptour³ and my pen furth tuike.
Syne thus begouth of Virgill the twelt buike.

coo.

² early morn, ere
time of mass.³ seized a pen-
case.

EVENING AND MORNING IN JUNE.

*From "The Proloug of the Threttene Buik of Eneados ekit to
Virgill be Mapheus Vegius."*

- TOWART the evin, amynd the summyris heyt,
Quhen in the Crab Appollo held his sete,
Duryng the joyous moneth tyme of June,
As gone neir was the day, and suppar done,
¹ quickly. I walkit furth abowt the feildis tye¹
² Which then. Quhilkis tho² replenist stude full of delyte,
With herbis, cornis, catale, and frute treis,
³ store. Plente of stoyr³, byrdis and byssy beis
⁴ green. In amerant⁴ medis fleand est and west,
Eftir laubour to tak the nychtis rest.
⁵ glanced on the And as I blynkyt on the lift⁵ me by,
heaven.
⁶ became. All byrnand reid gan walxin⁶ the evin sky ;
⁷ all, whole. The son, enfyrit haill⁷ as to my sycht,
Quhirlit about his ball with bemis brycht,
Declynand fast towart the north in deyd ;
And fyry Phlegon, his dym nychtis steid,
⁸ dipped, Dowkyt⁸ his heid sa deip in fludis gray
plunged. That Phebus rollis doun vnder hell away,
And Esperus in the west wyth bemis brycht
Vpspringis, as for-ridar of the nycht.
⁹ meadows. Amynd the hawchis⁹ and euery lusty vaill

| | |
|--|---|
| The recent dew begynnys doun to scaill ¹ , | ¹ scatter. |
| To meys ² the byrnyng quhar the son had schine, | ² allay. |
| Quhilk tho was to the neddir warld decline. | |
| At euery pilis ³ point and cornis croppis ⁴ | ³ hair's. ⁴ tips. |
| The techrys stude as lemand beriall droppis ⁵ | ⁵ The dew stood like burning |
| And on the hailsum herbis clene, but wedis ⁶ , | beryl drops. |
| Lyke crystall knoppis ⁷ or small siluer bedis. | ⁶ freefrom weeds. ⁷ knobs. |
| | |
| The lycht begouth to quynkill out and fail, | |
| The day to dyrkyn ⁸ , decline, and devaill ⁹ ; | ⁸ darken. ⁹ descend. |
| The gummis ¹⁰ rysis, doun fallis the donk rym ¹¹ , | ¹⁰ mists. ¹¹ dank rime. |
| Baith heyr and thair scuggis ¹² and schaddois dym. | ¹² clouds. |
| Vpgois the bak ¹³ wyth hir pelit ¹⁴ ledderyn flycht; | ¹³ bat. ¹⁴ naked. |
| The lark discendis from the skyis hycht, | |
| Singand hyr compling sang ¹⁵ eftyr hyr gys ¹⁶ , | ¹⁵ even-song. ¹⁶ guise. |
| To tak hyr rest, at matyn hour to rys. | |
| Owt our the swyre ¹⁷ swymmis the soppis ¹⁸ of mist, | ¹⁷ gorge. ¹⁸ clouds. |
| The nycht furthspred hyr cloke with sabill lyst ¹⁹ , | ¹⁹ edge. |
| That all the bewtie of the fructuus feyld | |
| Was wyth the erthis vmbrage clene ourheild ²⁰ . | ²⁰ covered over. |
| Bath man and beste, fyrth ²¹ , flude, and woddis wild | ²¹ pasture-land. |
| Involuit in the schaddois warrin sild ²² . | ²² were hidden. |
| Still war the fowlis fleis ²³ in the ayr, | ²³ Silent were the birds' flights. |
| All stoyr ²⁴ and catall seysit ²⁵ in thair lair, | ²⁴ store. ²⁵ secured. |
| And euery thing, quharso thame likis best, | |
| Bownis ²⁶ to tak the hailsum nychtis rest | ²⁶ Makes ready. |
| Eftir the day's laubour and the heyt. | |
| Closs warrin all and at thar soft quyet, | |
| But sterage ²⁷ or removing, he or sche, | ²⁷ Without stir. |
| Ouder ²⁸ best, byrd, fysch, fowle, by land or se; | ²⁸ Either. |
| And schortlie euery thing that dois repare | |

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